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**Leslie R. Barlow**

# LETTERS

TO THE

BRIDGEPORT COMFORT CLUB

FROM

THE FOREIGN CHAPTER

IN FRANCE



WRITTEN BY

Sergeant Leslie R. Barlow, 102nd Ambulance Company  
26th Division  
American Expeditionary Forces  
France 1917-1918

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## FIRST LETTER

July 18th, 1918

Dear Mothers:—

Now that we have our Foreign Chapter of our Comfort Club, may we just review a few of the more interesting things that have taken place since we were promenading down Main Street and saw those catchy signs in the window about "Free Trips to Berlin", etc., and advising us to sign up with the First Connecticut Ambulance Company. So being fired with patriotism and yearning for adventure, also thinking that our best girls would like us all the more if we could write them a line from Berlin, we hike up to the Armory and sign up with "The Uncle Sam and Lieut. John T. Powers Company, Inc." We stood trembling while beaucoup doctors glared at our bodies like Al Goulden does at a fellow when he stalls his motor on the corner of Main and Fairfield.

Well, then we drilled two or three nights a week at the Armory on squads east, squads west, right upper berth, prepare to load and all that important? stuff. Sergeants were drilling us as they read it from the book, some of us had uniforms and some didn't, those that did automatically becoming fixtures about town.

Then someone said that we were to get a dollar for each regular drill night, but I guess we are like Heinie, we have something coming to us, but anyway we don't need it as our Mas just sent us one hundred real American dollars.

Next our orders came that we should report at the Armory, ready to move at a minute's notice. Well, we were there, suit cases, hand bags, and all, every one excited, but we had a chance to cool off for we did not leave for three days, then down to dear old Niantic we go, more squads east and squads west, hung around a month or two, each day trying to follow Lieut. Sprague or Lieut. Nagle out in the country for a few miles with packs on our backs and saying it was a tough war.

And to think we had a big shower bath, a canteen and Social Center that was a Red Cross and Salvation Hut all in one, but we didn't know it then. The folks used to come up to

see us and bring homemade Cake and Pie. Oh boy, we realize now 'twas sure a tough war, not even a mosquito bite say nothing of cooties.

Then the order came that we must be inoculated, vaccinated, sterilized and re-examined about steen times, till it seemed as if there's only a few of us left. Now we are the Third Connecticut Ambulance Company, all equipped and dressed up just like real soldiers, and off we go to the station, where the Misses Bond and a few more of the ladies of the town bade us a farewell, for we were off for "Somewhere in France."

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Above lines are where parades, bands and over the top stuff now in style, did not come in. Clickety clack went that old train for a day and a night and we bunched up like sardines we thought, but they hadn't pulled any of that 8 chevaux 40 homme stuff on us then. Then aboard ship and out the river we go, under the world's greatest bridge, all just getting our first lesson of this war and each one trying to make the other fellow think he had seen lots of water before, but in the same breath speaking of the front or back of the ship, or upstairs and down cellar. Next stop was in the great back bay at Halifax, there we waited at anchor one whole week, all the time eating that slum that Dorsted Horned chef handed out to us. But we have all thanked God that we were not in that very same place a few weeks later when that awful explosion occurred. Now, as the rest of the convoy is here, we weigh anchor, point her nose into the briny deep; see, we are already learning the sailor stuff. And we went and we went and then went some more, and I want to say right now, that the guy that calls that thing which we crossed, a pond, why he don't know nothing that's all, Why we went east, we went south, even headed toward Greenland, why we zigzagged so much that we began to think the skipper was tanked up on his English tea, or that the compass had gone sour, and all the time that same camouflaged barber shop ship was circling around us till we were dizzy ourselves. You see 'twas our first real look at this camouflaged stuff, although of course, we ourselves, in civil life, have done a little of it in regard to pay we received cars we owned, etc.

Well, we went on and on, always keeping a look out for subs, but we were not afraid, for up there on one of the gun crews were Pomeroy, Marsten and Leonard of our own gang.

Then about the last two days, something aggravated that there ocean, and we pitched and we rolled, we dove in and

climbed up those mountain high waves, rolled out of bunks, each one picking a fish to feed (some must have been whales). At night when trying to sleep, that old propeller would come out of the water and w-o-a how it would spin, then as the ship went back in that abyss that propeller shaft would ripety rip slam bang into that thrust box, as though the barge were going into steen pieces and we all prayed as we never prayed before that 'twould hang together till we made our port and we could unlimber from those life belts.

Well, to make a long story short "We made it." Then a short visit in the land, where, at our tent camp, we seemed to be chilled through from the fogs, but Old Glory and the Union Jack were flying from the same staff and it thrilled us. Besides we were seeing things we had not seen before, such as heather, holly and mistletoe. Then over we went to "Somewhere in France," now in a small craft that seemed to go so fast we were afraid she would burn her bottom, surely 'twould never give a barnacle a chance to grow. Now we are in France and up we go to a rest camp, and all I can say is "Beware of rest camps, (there ain't no such animal)."

Next we get put on one of those French trains and travelled second class, you know doors on each side instead of the end, and a little dinkey engine, like the one they used to run up the Naugatuck Branch, when old Pop Stewart was a fireman. Away we go to our first camp in France, where we are billeted in American barracks in a little town. Here we stayed till February, all the time it seemed to rain every day, but we received our heavy field shoes after a while, and even later we got some boots. Here it was we fought some terrible battles (of words) trying to make the natives into Yanks, usually having the best results by showing a few francs. Oh yes, we had our shilling and tuppence pieces changed by the Y. M. C. A. man into francs and sous. Let me say here that until we left that camp, we enjoyed the finest Y. M. C. A. that we have ever seen in this land, and I understand the money to pay for it was raised in the town which our dear Brother Bill Cummings called home. 'Twas at this same little French town, nestled away by itself near the birth place of Joan of Arc, that we ate on Thanksgiving Day and also on Xmas, all the good things, that you dear people by Hooverizing, had made possible for Uncle Sam to send us.

And maybe that man Carter of ours and his gang of chow stevedores, can't turn out some feed, if he gets the wherewithal.

Wished I dare tell you about the time Jim Morrell took ten minutes to buy a wash basin; after he made all kinds of

motions, like splashing water, etc., you know, then the lady said in fine English, "Oh, you want a wash basin."

Well, soon the order came that we must store our barrack bags, as we were to go to the front and could only carry what is called equipment "A" and that is just what is on our backs. So just before Lincoln's birthday, off we go up to do our bit and we have been doing it ever since, from street soldiers we must now be field soldiers.

But I must close this epistle now. This may all seem like ancient history, but stick around folks, for things were not always as interesting for the Kaiser as they may be soon.

DICK BARLOW.

102nd, Ambulance Company.

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## SECOND LETTER.

July 30th, 1918,  
Somewhere in France.

Dear Mothers:—

Guess I had better send in this second note of our medieval history before you can get time to tell me how sour the first one was.

Now, before we leave our first little French village, that I spoke of, let me say that the personnel of our company has been changed greatly by transfers and detachments. Our company has volunteered to a man to be used in the Trench Fever test, but as only a few are needed, away went Worley, W. Murphy, Lucas, Peck, Schaeffer, Noren, Watkins and Pill. Several others of our boys went to this same place, but as they have already been sent to other companies, we cannot count them. Among them were Connors, Vassel, Turner and Lambert. I mention this as it shows the spirit your boys have wherever they go. Capt. Stevens, who was not only an officer but a father to us all as well, has parti, as have Lieut. Lawlor and his side kick, Hughey.

Our old horse drawn ambulances, that we toted clear from the good old U. S. A., are gone and we are now motorized. Hurray!

We are now the 102nd Ambulance Company, Radikan, has written our famous motto, Made in Bridgeport, the best Ambulance Company, in the best Division, of the best army of the World. There is no such thing as can't in the 102nd Ambulance Company.

We have learned to put our gas masks on in steen seconds



less than nothing. So we will load our ambulances on those big? freight cars and parti pour la trencha.

Part of our boys must be litter bearers and the rest ambulance drivers and orderlies, and right here is where they start to pull that 8 Chevaux 40 Homme stuff on us (you know, one fellow tries to put a No. 14 shoe in your port side ear and you put a knee in some fellow's tummie).

Be sure and wear your steel stetsons when getting off the sleeping? car, as the station is often shelled. Well, off we get at the city of ———. Golly there were some big shell holes, we were a little nervous, but we didn't get shelled. Anyway we were all anxious to do our bit, as rumors were that men from our division were to be sent home to drill the new army and some had fell for it, especially non-coms, for surely they wouldn't have the heart to go home without having been to the front. Well, we hiked to our homes, all the way passing trenches, barb wire, buildings marked "God Strafe England" fruit trees cut off short, unexploded shells, horses with gas masks, etc., etc. We were then billeted in the cellars of shell shattered houses, but soon our new Lieut. said, "Who will volunteer for litter bearers to go up at once?" Well, everybody lost that tired feeling and they nearly stampeded him, he finally yelled "Kamerad" for it looked as though they would trample him to death. In this sector we are to work with the French. Here we saw air duels, frogs drop from balloons in their parachutes and, well, I won't attempt to tell you what we saw, for everyone had different experiences and I am not going to steal any of the boys' thunder. Any of the fellows have seen more than I, and I still insist that if a man hasn't had the delirium tremens, he hasn't been nowhere and he hain't seen nothing. I can only say that every one of your brave lads will have great things to tell, so you better have Mother Wyrzten, and the rest of those 'petite pomme de terre' store owners, order in a good supply of extra large saw dust boxes, for when this gang ever gets turned loose, well, it's just as Phillip Brodskey says "Ken you imagine eet?"

Well, we did our bit up there, handling French, American and a few Hun patients, had a few real busy days with gassed men, scabbies, etc. These last we had to transport to the hospital in our big trucks, where they were scrubbed till sore, then oiled and back to the lines in about three days.

The Ambulance men had formed their Forty Thieves Society and had drawn a plan of a dugout to be made in Sea-Side Park, special pipes to the different soda fountains. We have often wondered what Heinie thought, when he captured

that same little town and saw this drawing on the wall. Our gang thought we had our share of cooties anyway, so when the order came that we were to start to the rear and go on old style maneuvers and then to a rest camp we were happy. So just after St. Patrick's Day, we start to the rear, to an accompaniment of special Boche music (they're good that way).

Well, we landed in a beautiful farm, near where Napoleon received his early military education, everything was lovely, the birds sang, frogs peeped and even a little lake with swan circling around on it. Surely this is fine, guess the war must be over for us. When down the road comes one of those dispatch riders going ala No. 6 to a fire down Barnum Ave., and presto change, maneuvers are off, so is the rest camp. Away they yank us Yanks in big trucks up to our second front, near                     . Arriving at 2 G. M. and raining hard, put out those cigarettes, etc. laws, we thought we were at the front. Well, then they hauled us ten or fifteen kilos further and we thought the driver must be on the wrong road and we would surely land in Berlin. But everything turned out alright as it usually does. We are now in the town where Mr. Lusk left us and came to speak to you. Billeted in barns and more friend cooties, I suppose. Yep, you win again.

This is our own front, no French to bother us and we went to it. This was sure war. Part of our fellows in a big dressing station and the auto drivers and orderlies making Hell's Corner and Prayer Bend steen times a day, with friend Heinie's artillery paging them. When there was no scrapping at the front, why, we would start a fight of our own, to see who should have the Victrola, that the Graphophone people gave us. There was surely a gift far greater than they knew, for it has even toned down men who were severely shell shocked, I understand this treatment is used extensively by the English. Why we think so much of our Victrola we have put a service stripe on it and it will soon have another one.

Well, here we are, nearly finished in this sector, new division is relieving us, roads are jammed, all kinds of trucks, caissons, escort wagons, ambulances, and ammunition trains, now and then a dead horse or mule or a truck off the road. Well, "C'est le guerre" and anyway we are happy, for we are going back for a long rest, even may parade on the Fourth in a great city here. Sure enough they took us out and onto the trains and off we go to the great city. It is July 3rd, and here we are just three miles from that great tower which we see in the distance. Well, that's funny, haven't any of our boys writ-

ten about our parade after coming from our second front? Well, by Golly, I will in my next.

So I will now make a motion that you adjourn for the men folks will soon be home for their supper and you know how those men are; well, if they kick, blame it on

DICK BARLOW,

102nd Ambulance Company.

Gosh, this is worse than the first one. Anyhow those boys had no business to pick on me to do their writing.

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### THIRD LETTER

August 4th, 1918.

Hello Folks:—

Have received no bombs in my mail to date so perhaps you will also pardon a third letter.

Well, as I was saying, we were on the train, just outside the gay city, everybody happy, it is July 3rd, and sure enough, guess we are going to parade tomorrow alright. Engines are sneaking in and out in the great freight yards, all is activity as our train slows down and then finally comes to a halt to wait for an all clear light. The people here are waving at us and seem glad that we are here, and we wave back and say to ourselves, "Gee, they're not like those pro Germans up on the other front, for they didn't seem to want us there, and we knew someone was spying, so we eyed one another with suspicion, for they had lived so near the nation's boundary lines and had inter-married so much that it was hard to tell where their sympathies lay.

Well, we were glad that we were welcome here, for a wave from one of those dear, sad-eyed women, usually dressed in black, meant a great deal to us way down deep in our hearts, for we knew that these people had long ago had this cruel war brought home to them in ways that we all hoped our dear loved ones at home would never have to feel.

Well, we waited and waited for that signal, but we didn't mind it for we were near a mansion owned by a French officer, who spoke fine English and had open house for us. Others were watching the double decker cars go by, ala the Mayor of Stepney waiting on Read's corner for a Grasshopper. Wilcox, Northrup, Drury and Holzheimer were strutting around like pouter pigeons, so the people could see their Croix de Guerres. Well, hurry up, youse guys, she's pulling out. H—I, (meaning Hindenburg Line) what do you know? They have put an

engine on the other end and are pulling us out again. Well, if that wouldn't break the heart in those stone dogs on Park Avenue. What do you know about that for pure, unadulterated, triple expansion, high explosive, what I mean, nerve.

Well, they yanked us Yanks clear out in the country for miles and drop us off at a little place half way between the gay city and the marines, with a large farm for a billet, but 'twas 2 G. M. and no one knew which was t'other, so we were told same as the doughboys were when they were surrounded by Huns, "Help yourselves, boys." Some won a horse barn, and I saw four in an oxcart outdoors, and even some officers slept in the gutter, all sprawled out, dead to the world, leaning up against their blanket roles, all tired out. I appeal to you, think of it dear people, your boys suffering like this. Bet you will come across alright now in the Fourth Liberty Loan after that. But we didn't mind it, we've seen a lot worse than that and may see more. Next day they hied us away up near the lines, where the Marines were making the Huns put on his brakes so suddenly, that they burned out a lot of brake lining and other things, mostly other things. So we had a swim in the big river, till the gendarmes stopped us, said that it was full of barb wire, dead horses and good Boche.

Next day the Yankee boys went in the lines and soon Heinie had to throw her in reverse. Crump and Ferris they both wanted to transfer, soon as they saw those tanks, but when they found out they were like a motorcycle, no reverse, well, that was a horse of another color.

We are all very good boys up here, where that Fairfield feller left us. Yep, went to church every day, had ter, the dressing station was in the church.

Well, we cleaned up the town, of course that is understood, all burgs, farm yards, etc., that we stop at, out come the shovels and brooms.

This little town will get its name into history of the great war, as being the Birthplace of the Foreign Chapter of the Bridgeport Comfort Club.

We have never realized the seriousness of war so much as up here, for this land has been twice devastated by the enemy, and we are living in the homes that the people had to leave and flee for their lives. Why, there are even real honest-to-goodness beds, chairs, clocks and even the piano just as they had left, why we even had a cow for a while, till the natives started to come back.

So now we must move up again for a few miles, as things are busy, and believe me, we worked as we never worked be-

fore; still they go back and we move up again, land right near — well, that aforesaid feller used to wear his initials on his collar ornaments. Dead horses, Huns, cows, pigs, and oh boy, that stench, and very little water to drink and look out for that, as the enemy was in this town twenty-four hours ago, a plane down here, great German shells in their wicker work baskets, all along the road shell holes to suit anyone's taste, and a rifle stuck in the ground, bayonet down, with a few name cards, lodge receipts or a postal card stuck in the bolt to let the word know that some Mother's boy had done his last hitch and done it well, gone West. No one must touch a shell or pull a wire, kick or pick up anything, for this is no postal card or souvenir war, and anyway she will love you just as much if you come home all in one piece. Over here is a Boche 210 in the gutter, next to where we must set up and go to it again. Everybody is busy, keep going as long as you can, line up against a wall, grab a few hours sleep and start again and still they come, but we know the other fellow was ten times as busy as we. Not a whimper out of one of them, it's only "Give me a cigarette, will you, Bud?" There they are, lying there on their litters, some meeting their pals as they come in and happen to be placed near them, or say "Has So and So been through," or "poor Jack, he got it hard." And look at those poor shell shock lads shake and quiver when a shell goes over, and those quivering lads duck needlessly and even cry. But good people, don't ever blame a lad with shell shock or think he was the least bit yellow, for no one was ever asked to go through what those poor devils were, it's a wonder they are not all that way. Of all the men we handled in that last ten days of Hell raised to the nth power, most of them will live, as they had what we call G. S. W.'s. That is, Heinie couldn't get his artillery set, so it was mostly machine gun and rifle wounds, all termed gun shot wounds.

Well, we have done our bit here it seems, and back we go to the church town again. Gee, this is fine, away back of the lines now, not a balloon in sight. We didn't breathe very easy for a few days, figuring that maybe they might send us in again, but now we have taken it as real. Nothing to do, just old time street soldier stuff, you know ala Niantic, reveille, drill call, fatigue gangs, taps and all that, "Ken you imagine eet?" Why we even have a bath and a new set of underwear, thanks to Lieut. Sprague and his steam cootie machine, even got a hair cut now, just like a human bein'. Don't tell, but when Joe Rich came to his turn at the bath, he found two cooties fighting over which should have the iron cross for doing the greatest duty



for his fellow country men, they had made a regular race track path on his back between the "sure kill 'em" cootie bag on his neck and the one on his hips. Why, they had raced so hard for the last few days that he snipped off their young lives just out of sympathy to keep them from starving to death.

Und by Gollies, here's Dud Mills and Stan Glover back from the hospital, Hurray.

Well, I guess this is a happy bunch of boys, for yesterday we had our division show, down back of the hospital. And say it is fine, not a sour act, most of the boys picked to be in it were actors when in civil life, and each one is doing his best, as they may get a chance to tour the good old U. S. A. One fellow sang "Just A Baby's Prayer at Twilight Hour", and all your boys have been whistling it ever since, and as I watch those big husky khaki clad, seemingly war hardened boys of yours loving those two cute, curly haired, French youngsters, down near our kitchen, I know that under those trench mirrors beats a heart as large as an ox and a soul that yearns for those at home. But I must not write sob stuff.

Duck! oh never mind, it's alright, 'twas only Pomeroy imitating a 210 coming over, anyway there ain't no shells away back here. Guess this will fini my old stuff. You may not be interested in any part of them, but I know you will in this much, "Don't worry about the morals of your boys over here." We haven't even been in a town for six weeks where beer could be purchased, and here's the best of all, not a man on the duty roster of this Company has a venereal disease. Can you beat this in the states? Oh boy!

All up for the seventh inning. Here's Frank Deutsch with a whole gang of francs for us medical engineers.

DICK BARLOW.

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#### FOURTH LETTER

August 11th, 1918.

Bridgeport Comfort Club,

Dear Friends:—

The Executive Committee says the old man better write to his girls and report on that two hundred dollars we received, so here goes.

First, the check was so large we had to get the signature of a Major or Captain, for of late mere non coms hadn't for some reason been having checks of this size cashed. Well Captain Stevens came to our rescue with his John Hancock,

and a Y. M. C. A. man gave us the francage. Golly, their paper money is so large here, we thought first we would paper a couple of rooms, but later decided to give each fellow dix franc.

We have been able to reach a large number who have been transferred from time to time, as the entire sanitary train happened to be in this locality. Most of them had received five dollars from your Club, but we were glad to give them the ten franc besides, as we figured that they had been out of luck on some of the good things we in the original company had previously received from you. We have no way of keeping in touch with all the men that are transferred, as for instance the order reads, so many men must go to the 101st Infantry, but we do not know what company or battallion till we meet again and that is often months. So hereafter the committee thinks best, that should we receive any further moneys from you, that it be divided only among the men still in our company. We have told as many of the fellows as we have seen to send in their new addresses to you. Now perhaps you would wish us to do otherwise, if so just drop a line to any of our committee, for we want to work with you, as you will see by the copy of our Regulations, which I will enclose in our next letter.

Each one has signed the enclosed slips as we have paid them the ten francs and we have kept a duplicate copy of same. So much for the money and as the slip reads, "We thank you."

Since forming our Foreign Chapter of the Bridgeport Comfort Club, our boys have voted, as a company, to draw from our mess fund, the sum of 200 francs, which we spent as follows: Oranges, 69.60; Tomatoes, 52.50, Lemons, 24.; Cauliflower, 45.; Radishes, 6.; Record Book, 1.50; Victrola Needles, 1.00; total 199.60.

Also an S. O. S. Unit that was attached to us at that time, chipped in their share, 70 francs, so as to be in on our feed. This money we spent as follows: 6 Baking Powders, 5.90; 1 Case of Pears, 32.90; 1 Case of Corn, 15.60; 1 Case of Pears, 15.60; total 70.00.

We have also voted to spend 1000 francs from our Company fund, in adopting two orphans. Data has been sent us, and we have sent in the money, will no doubt soon hear whether we have won a blonde or brunette, and all about them. You bet I'll let you know.

Oh yes, and did I tell you this gang of ours is going to send you five copies of the Stars and Stripes for one year, we all like our paper and hope you find them interesting.

Tried to send a telegram to you when we finished our

hitch in the lines, that all were well, but I have never seen the Red Cross man since, so do not know if it went through or not. I, no doubt, will see him at a later date. Speaking of the Red Cross, let me say they are our best friends over here. Above all others give to the Red Cross, for there is no greater Christian work than this.

We have had two ball games this past week, split even. Bet this line up will make you think of the old days at Seaside Park.

Ballard and Merrill, p

Gilbert, c

Beers, 1st

McDonald, 2nd

Wills, ss

Ahern, 3rd

Doreski, 1 f

Widinghoff-Brendle c f

Cowie-Marshall, r f

Yesterday we had a divisional track meet, Doughboys, Leathernecks, Pill Rollers and everything. Well, the Sanitary Train scored thirty one points and almost bust up the show, when they went ahead even in the grenade throwing. No other athletic events of late, save Al Sorensen and Hub Beers having a harvesting contest out in one of the wheat fields, Newtown won.

Those pictures taken of the Comfort Club in the Red Cross parade and sent to Bert Coyle, sure were fine. We all feel better acquainted now, most all of us saw someone we knew, and everyone remembered that husky youngster in the navy suit.

We have not received the Pershing Fund money as yet, although our Company clerk has sent in our list of Connecticut men sometime ago. Think perhaps it is quite a bit of work to find out just what companies the men are in and divide the money pro rata.

We are still in the town of L——, where Lieut. Nagle left us.

Rumors are, several men in our company or train, are to be made Lieutenants and several sergeants to go home for a time. Our non coms have dusted off their manners. Well if any of them drop in on you, don't mind their swear words, they don't mean them, anyhow they wouldn't talk very much, they would be too busy eating some of Ma's PIES.

Au Revoir,

DICK BARLOW, Sec. and Treas.

Foreign Chapter of the  
Bridgeport Comfort Club.



## FIFTH LETTER.

Laignes Cote-d-Or, France  
August 22nd, 1918

Bridgeport Comfort Club,  
Mornin' Neighbors:—

Haven't received any mail for the Foreign Chapter as yet, but hope to soon, so will drop another note.

Since our last letter to you, we have followed Lieut. Nagle's example, and parti from the town of L——. They sure had us guessing as to which way we were to go, all sorts of rumors were afloat, but no one actually knew. Some said back to the lines, others said to the rear, to Italy, to Russia and even HOME. So when we started out we were all on the qui vive to see which way we would go. First we hiked across the old suspension bridge that used to have the dynamite tied to it, ready to go up should friend Heinie become too ambitious. Then we were put in big trucks and away we went. Give a guess now which way we will go, to the left means up to the lines again, to the right will mean we go the rear for a rest, everybody is holding their breath, and oh boy, what a relief, for they did not turn to the left. Hurray we are going to the REAR.

Yep, sure enough, back we go all the afternoon long, town after town we passed through, and say maybe it wasn't hot and dusty on those cement roads, and when we finally stopped and pitched tents at night in some of the recently harvested wheat fields, we looked as if we had been at work in a flour mill. We enjoyed it though, and next morning off we went again, through some large towns and small ones, even back through the town, where I said the swan were on the pond in the yard. All the way we watched the harvesting in the fields, women, men and young boys all working together, some with American made harvesting machinery and some with their own old style hand cradling scythes, with a blade three inches wide. We had seen so much wheat and other grains on our previous trips, that we wondered if they would ever be able to harvest it all, as the men were mostly away and the French reapers have only a five or six foot cutter, where a similar American machine would have a blade eight foot long, but they have done it and it is no wonder, for they do not stop until eight and nine o'clock at night, and it is mighty interesting to see them coming back into town again at night in those great heavy two wheeled wagons, one horse hitched ahead of the other. Large numbers of stallions are used for farm work as they are not dependable for army work, and are very easy

going and gentle, as they are worked extremely hard all the time, in fact everything seems moderate here, herds of cattle mope along the village streets like our oxen at home.

Where was I? Oh, yes, we were in trucks with the dust rolling up in clouds and going down our alimentary canals and forming a concrete lining in our hard tack and corned willie emporiums.

We passed a great many houses with thatched roofs, fine truck gardens, miles and miles of vineyards on the hillsides, all kinds of grain, but no corn, have only seen one patch of corn in France.

Well, we kept swinging along from one town to another all the second day, had an odd experience in one town. You see we thought we were old timers and had seen all the different allied troops, from Chinese coolies and Italian artillerymen to Portugese with their red hats, but here were some new ones, we were passing men wearing French uniforms, but with a flat four-pointed hat, and they were smiling away at us, shouting in fine English, "Hello, Yanks." Well, they knew us, but who the deuce are they? What do you know, they were American Polish Regiments and their khaki uniforms haven't arrived yet. As we whizzed past, we shouted out, "Anybody from Bridgeport?" One lad yelled, "Nope, Union City and Scoville's Shop." So I guess this isn't such a large old world after all.

Well, after we had ridden all day, we were ready to call it quits, and for once at least they were willing to let us, so off we piled. Gee, a nice town, few troops billeted here. Oh boy, hope we can stay and I guess we can, for the next day through the courtesy of the local priest, we were billeted in some church property, used as a boys' school, but closed for the summer. One building that was used as a lecture hall, we have for barracks, Bill Adams is using the stage as his boudoir, and some of the rest are pitched in dog tents, and like it fine. And the town is so nice and quiet, just the place for a rest, why the most noise one hears is at mess time and Harry Edes and Dubee are eating soup.

Quite a few of the boys have been sick with something similar to the three days' fever, but with dysentery and a sort of depression, sort of a re-action from several months' hard work, drinking water in each different town we hit, etc., we are told. Some are back from the hospital already and the rest are doing fine, none serious. Northrop, Clay, Carter, Wilcox and Claire have already come back to us and no more ill, so guess we have broken it up. We have rigged up a shower bath

out of a gasoline barrel, everybody has had a hair cut, and a bath after drill puts the old pep into a feller.

We are in what is called the S.O.S. now, meaning service of supply or rear, and can now name the town we are in, so will enclose a card of same, also a copy of our Foreign Chapter of the Bridgeport Comfort Club Rules and Regulations and hope your Club will approve of them and what we are doing.

Since we came to this town some of the young French lads, who have just reached eighteen, have been notified to report for military training and they were so happy they have been parading streets for several nights, blowing bugles, etc. Finest class of people here that we have had the privilege of mingling with over here—some quite well to do and many speak English. One French lady had a dozen of us at her home recently, played the piano for us and sang in English all the late American songs. Oh Gee, oh Golly, all you had to do was to close your eyes and let your mind wander a bit and you were over home in the front parlor down to the girl's house.

The Regimental Band plays every night for us now, as they are not to be used as litter bearers any more and their leaders are to be officers instead of sergeants. Almost forgot to tell you about the gymnasium we have as part of the school property; it is fine, all fitted out with parallel bars, swinging rings, dumb bells and two trapeze bars, one low and one regulation. The low one is only four feet from the ground and is now considered the personal property of Cooper and Shorty Keane, all others stay off, while Pop Brendle shines on the big one.

We have two fine new Lieutenants, brand new, just over, and now if they happen to censor this letter, I hope they will just try to be buck privates for a few minutes. Well they give us gas mask drills, etc., tell us all about gas, but most of this gang have seen steen times as much gas as they have. But they are regular fellows and we work fine with them. One is a dandy, old style Scotch Irish physician, and a regular daddy to us, goes eight miles out of his way to do anything he can for us and both are of the few that have come over here for the good they can do and not how much they can learn of surgery or how high they can rise. When they spoke to us about cooties and how to get rid of them, he said the best way was to get a greased paper bag, some ether, oil of cloves and burn em, well, listen girls, a soldier near the lines has about as much chance of dropping in a drug store and buying those things, as we have of getting ice cream and strawberry short cake. Another time up the line we met a dough boy whom we knew, in

fact it was young Hanrahan of your city, pretty tired, well cootied, dirty and some sores on his lower limbs which needed attention. When the examination was over the new Lieutenant says, "What you need, my boy, is to go back to your company, get new underwear, a hot bath, and put this liniment on." Well, in that drive, he had about as much chance of getting new underwear and a hot bath, as a Pro German in the Gauge department at the U. M. C. during a Red Cross campaign.

Hope they will pardon these little secrets, but we have a way of our own to fix cooties, sit still now and I will tell you. First, remove the shirt entirely from the body, second, place it on the ground and watch it till it gets seven or eight feet away, then let drive five or six hand grenades in rapid succession, then draw your hatchet and have some iodine ready for a counter attack.

Well, what has that to do with the natives here being very proud to welcome us to their town, especially since they have found out that we have come from C———. They can't understand it that we are so young and how Uncle Sam feeds us so well, and speaking of eats, just listen now, say couldn't we get in touch with some old broken down anarchist and make a deal with him to do away with a couple of those factories in the States that manufacture can openers, for then our Army mess sergeants would be out of luck and we might get something besides canned foods, why they even pull canned potatoes on us now, both sweet and Irish.

Say folks, wonder if you could do us a favor? It is this. Could you find out through the Adjutant General's office of your state, why we were never paid our drill money? We were told when we drilled at the Armory that we would receive a certain amount for each drill, if we had over 90% of the men at the drill. Men from Massachusetts and Rhode Island have received their checks since coming to this country, even their members who were not at the border. May I also say we have not received as yet the Connecticut Pershing Fund money.

Well, must close for this time. What do you say, you call up the Telephone office or Warner's Shop or anywhere you can, and fix it with a few of the girls, and we will bring a squad over and go to Poli's some afternoon next week.

Au Revoir,

DICK BARLOW,  
102nd Ambulance Company.

P. S.—Tell the folks when they write to put in a few stamps and the boys will appreciate them, for we use them in sending home the Stars and Stripes and other papers and we

have no way of getting them here except at a Divisional Post Office, that is often miles away. The Y. M. C. A. does not often have them. Also when addressing mail to us just A. E. F. may be taken for the Australian Expeditionary Forces, so to be sure we are told to use Amex Forces and there is only one 102nd Ambulance Company in the Amex Forces, so no need to write 101st Sanitary Train or mention the division number, just write,

Per So and So.,  
102nd Ambulance Company,  
Amex Forces

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### SIXTH LETTER

September 14th, 1918

Bridgeport Comfort Club,  
Bridgeport, Conn., U. S. A.

Dear Friends:—

Please step before the mast, girls. S'matter, our Committee gets no mail? Ain't angry, be you?

Well, anyway, all the officers of the Foreign Chapter have been thrown down so many times before that they don't mind it and they say that faint heart never won fair damsels, D. S. C.'s or discharges, so we will try again. No mail from you as yet, in fact no one has had much mail in the last three weeks, as there is a tie-up somewhere along the road. Although we don't like to admit it, we are like the Hun in one way and that is, we have a lot of mail coming to us from the good old U. S. A.

You will remember I said that we had entered college, had a gym and everything. Yep, and passes start next week sure, Cockerton, Holzheimer and Foley have had their trousers pressed, shoes shined, faces washed and all slicked up like a Polish church, and imagining themselves on the main stem at gay Paree. We were enjoying band concerts most every night. Beat the Signal corp at baseball, 4 to 2, with Ballard and Carter as our battery. Why we even all went to church at the special memorial service for those killed and wounded in recent battles. One other day there was a funeral service of an aged civilian, and all the men folks were out, all dressed up in dandy Prince Albert suits and high hats, a la August Baker out at Mountain Grove. Why, we didn't know there were so many of those plug hats left in the world. Fred Kellar, better known as "Hand Grenade Mike" was itching to let a couple of grenades



go at the hats, but finally decided to hold them to fish with up at Pembroke Lake.

One new fellow has just come to our company, very sad case, he was **forced** to drive an ambulance down at one of the big seaports and couldn't go to a burlesque show only twice a week, although he was eating from real china dishes, he had to have his mess kit inspected every Monday morning. Now that is what we call a tough war. Someone asked if he had ever been at the front. "Nope, I haven't, but now fellows, I think I have a mighty good idea of what it is up there, for one day down at Paris, I saw an airplane shot down and it landed right near us." Pardon our repeating our selves, but like the fellow that hadn't had the tremens, he hain't been nowhere and he hain't seen nothin'.

We used to hike around the town and watch the farmers thrashing their grains, most every farm seemed to have a one horse tread mill thrasher, women and all working till sunset each day. Oh, of course, we had to drill five or six hours each day at litter drill, squads up and two's west and all that important? stuff. Let me say here that these or any fellows who have carried a few thousand litters in actual duty, without ever giving an order, it is mighty hard to make them put any interest in litter drills, and no matter what officers or non coms are put with them, they can never be made to do that street soldier stuff like we did when rookies. Why some argue so over doing anything of this nature, one would think they had been reading the life of Lawyer Patrick.

Well, everything was lovely, as I said, for a long time, pretty near a week, then someone with an O. D. chin strap and nickle plated spurs blows a whistle and says something about "parteeing tout de suite," well, in a couple of hours we had closed the college, gym, et al., and were in those luxurious touring cars of ours and off we went. Oh, don't ask me where? How do I know? Like the colored troops we passed and tried to jolly one lad in the rear by saying "Where you all g'wan, man?" "Don't know, boys, that man up front am a leading" was the reply we received.

And speaking of "parteeing" reminds me of the time we left dear old Niantic on our first move. Why, we packed up stuff for two weeks at least, everyone was excited, three or four had nervous prostration, including the C. O., and one or two were run over. Now a days some one blows the whistle once, and two hours later he gives it a couple of toots, and away we go, Q. M., kitchen stuff, medical supplies, and dressing station, all aboard, cut her loose, "parti tout de suite" is right. Al-

though this Committee hasn't been in consultation with General Foch of late, the only reason we know for moving was, maybe they found out that those cement linings to our stomachs, I spoke of, needed a little patching up, a la Warrenite on Connecticut Avenue, you know.

Well, we went and we went and then went some more, passed our old billets in the town of our first stop on the hike from the little town, where the swan were on the lake, up toward our second front. Fields look fine, grain is all harvested. Although we did not believe they could ever do it, but on all the trip not a field was seen left unharvested, nothing in the ground now save some third crop alfalfa and plenty of mangel wertzels for the stock. Great herds of sheep are in the fields and the trees are just turning enough to be attractive. Here you boys, come out of those apple trees! This sure is a beautiful season to travel. What do you say, we start out next Sunday and go up through Derby to Waterbury and back via Cheshire. there's a pretty route, or go up to Hartford and Springfield, up one side of the river and down the other, through that tobacco growing country. Oh, the deuce, I just remembered you are having gasless Sundays over there and here I have wasted all that good paper, well, that's a good cause, so we are with you, it's all off.

You understand that when they are moving troops around, that on coming to a large town or city, we stop three or four kilos outside, get all set, then shoot through, like Crazy Lewis used to up around those Litchfield County towns, then outside the town again we slow down. Have some hard tack with a little dash of dust on it, Mr. Sorensen? Ah, don't bother him, he is asleep as usual, is the remark we hear.

We passed through a couple of towns, where they had beer on draught, but of course we couldn't stop, but we figured it out that we were about even anyway, as just two towns back we passed a farm yard that needed cleaning up, and although we slowed down, us medical engineers did not have to get off and go to it. While none of our boys claim to be expert prognosticators, whatever that is, and seeing that the law is off foolish question No. 29, "When is the war going to be over?" we want to say right now that it can't possibly last the year out, for our Committee find that there are only ciquante cing farms in France still to be cleaned up and that's no job at all for all the boys over here now. What we are trying to figure out now is, how the cows know which is the kitchen door and which is the barnyard.

On the trip, we bivouaced at night, camouflaging as much

as possible, then next day or so start again and pitch tents again. Ever do it? Why say, it's the finest way we know of to find out just how infinitely small one really is in this old world. Just open up the back flap of the tent and gaze at the stars, the moon and those rolling clouds, then think of how many others there are in the world besides you, all looking up to that same Master, and you are imagining that you are some one. Why the —— Well, just try it sometime, that's all.

Now I can't tell you where we are and anyway you don't care, as long as you know that as always these boys of yours are ready to do their bit. All but one or two are back from the hospital and no one has gone in the last two weeks, except Bill Adams with another broken wrist from cranking a car. Anyway, folks, don't mind it, if you do hear from a friend sometime that he is in the hospital. It doesn't always mean that he is dying or even very bad off, for it is different than in civil life in this way. Men doing duty must be able to hike or go to the hospital. Now, at home if he had ingrowing toe nails, a broken wrist, ankle or three days' fever he could stay at home if he wished. We have no facilities for caring for anyone, so away he must go to where they have. Men must even go to the hospital to get a plate for teeth or to get eyes tested and glasses fitted, as in Ma Phillips recent case.

Listen girls, someone must have snitched about our deal to fix the mess sergeant by cutting off the supply of can openers, for Sergt. Carter has served us pancakes several times recently and even since coming here, where we found the finest four stove mess house we ever had, why he even celebrated by serving us with open faced squash pies.

Why we have even all had a hot bath since coming here, never used to think much about this little stunt, but over here it is an event to go down in the diary.

Wonder if I ever told you about the fire departments over here, most all the houses are built of stone and not much to burn, only some large hand hewed wooden rafters, so they don't need very much, but I saw on the corner the large sign POMPE INCENDIE No. 69, so to satisfy my curiosity I went up to see No. 69. Whoa, oh Gee. Say, ever see Chief Evitts, with a Warner Brothers' red shirt on, leading the Trumbull fire department to a fire? Why they have these Frogs stopped six ways, No. 69 was a big pan on two wheels with a hand pump attached. No wonder, George Stevens, our clean cut chap from Milford, said it reminded him of home and the old rounders that used to sit on the depot platform on Saturday



night, twirling cork screws on their fingers, while watching for the late train to come in.

Most of the towns we have been in of late do not have beer for sale and it has gotten to be a by word in some companies "Fini Biere." Of course our company doesn't mind it. Plenty of wines, but they are so sickening, to most of the fellows and even to those who did formerly take a drink, that a great demand has been made for something to take its place as most every one has a so-called sweet tooth. Every man has eaten more chocolate than they ever did in the States and the demand is so great that the Y. M. C. A. cannot begin to furnish us enough, and the French confections do not begin to fill the bill. Over here a fellow will see a sign in a store about confections. You go in expecting to buy an ice cream soda or a box of 29c Saturday Specials, and they are liable to hand you out a neck tie or a pair of Paris garters, for these are included as confections. Perhaps finally after a battle of words, you manage to come out with a package of biscuit, ginger cookies or cake, and on opening them up you find that they taste about like a pretzel, only not quite so juicy.

So you had a ball game in your town, with one team of players coming in airplane and the other in submarine; thought at first it was one of those Winsted true stories. And our own Levinsky got a wallop and by a clay Indian at that. S'matter, Battler? Pardon us, dear people, for criticising, but when we read the sporting sheet of late, we say, "Why don't the fighters and ball players come over here, or don't they know there is a war on?" Some of us were over age, but we came just the same. Don't those gold stars on the arms of the parents they pass each day mean anything to them? And you girls that are getting married to officers,—think twice, are you sure you are not marrying a uniform? And you young fellows still in America seeking to be officers before you have shown your worth to Uncle Sam. I admit you will look nice in a uniform, the money is good, too, and the folks in the old home town will think you are a ring-tailed humdinger. But listen. Put yourself over here. Can you handle men? Can you write home to a Mother that her son went West, while under your command? Can you say to yourself, away down deep in your soul, that her boy was handled by a fellow with the old stuff in him that makes a Man?

Girls, stick to your lover over here if you have one. Don't be impatient, for these fellows are going through an apprenticeship to manhood that if they are spared to re-

turn, will make them big hearted, broad minded, square as a dollar, straight from the shoulder, men of tomorrow.

I thank you,

DICK BARLOW,

Sec. and Treas., Foreign Chapter.

P. S.—Two prints enclosed were taken by Sunny George Wright.

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### SEVENTH LETTER.

September 18th, 1918.

Bridgeport Comfort Club,

Dear Friends:—

Met a Red Cross man last night, so sent along another "All well" telegram to you. We find that you in America know very quickly through the Press, after our Division gets in action. May I explain that "All wells" to you mean no casualties in recent fighting, not necessarily no men in the hospital, for in any company there are at least one or more in all the time.

Received two days ago, my first answer to any of my letters to our Club. Hope our letters may be of interest to you and that you will let us know of any way we can aid one another.

On September 5th there was a special church service for those fallen in recent battles, and at the same service, citations were presented to a large number of men. From our company to receive them were Kwasniski, Radikin, Wall, McElroy, Banks, Stevens and Thompson. Oh, this gang of yours generally horns in on all the doings over here in one way or another. Anything without a 102nd doughboy, leatherneck, or ambulance man in it, is like a circus 'thout lemerade.

Sometime ago we met the artillery boys from your city, Capt. Bennett and all, going up the line to send over a few kisses to Heinie, via some nice new guns nearly as large as those in the Armory. Yes, and only the other night who blew in to see us but Jack Avery and Myron Jackson. You know that song about "Ain't it great to meet a lad from your home town." Well, what I mean, the writer of that song knew his little leather bound testament.

Before we left the town where I wrote last to you, several of us had the pleasure of going through a French hospital. We have hauled many a lad up to the back door

of one of these places, but this was our first time to see the boys after we left them, and it was certainly very interesting. Why in one ward where fractures were treated, some of the lads had so many pulleys, handles and riggin' around them they could almost qualify for an engineer. One even had a metal pin through his fractured knee cap and his leg held in a special adjustable German frame, while another had a leg in a plaster cast, made so he would be able to walk on it after three days, and those girls in another ward probing wounds several inches deep, made one's throat kinda get out of kilter for a minute, and we thought we were hard boiled to those things. Why, we will take off our hats to those *croix rouge* gals. Another thing makes one feel like the night he proposed to his first wife, to run ker plunk right along side of one of those big American locomotives. You know, those with the super heating riggin' on 'em like those trotting horses up at Danbury Fair, and you imagine yourself back on the old depot platform with a couple of those 1300 type rolling by and you say to yourself "Well, there goes quite a few "Liberty Bonds."

Well, as I was saying in my last letter, they were taking us around the country in big trucks, pitching tents here and there and moving so much at night that we began to feel as though we had done something we were ashamed of, or were understudying for second story work. One camp we were outside a big city, so our Committee having some money from what you sent us, went into town to see what we could buy. Well, everything was so high it seemed a shame to waste good money, but when we saw some real bananas, we could not resist, but could only buy three and one half dozen good ripe ones, but finally got a large can of jam and some cheese, and maybe they don't reap a harvest from the American soldiers, they wanted eight francs a dozen for oranges, about \$1.60, bananas cost six francs, eggs five francs.

Away we went that night for another town. Don't ask us where for we haven't seen a paper in several days and are only trusting to luck that the fellow up front don't lose that map. Wait a minute, driver, there is Vernon Peck transferred back to our company, let him on.

Hey, Ballard, all up, lucky seventh, looka that castle we are stopping near, bet that is where Bob Ritchie, of the U. M. C. used to live. Bet we all have a suite of rooms. Yep, we did? Out in tents under the trees in the rain. Anyhow the officers enjoyed the castle, we hope. 12 G. M. and still raining. All out, we move again, boys. Curses why didn't we

bring along an express wagon. This time where we stopped we could count six or seven sausages in the air and had some dugouts that had bunks so close we imagined we were on the Corsican. One dugout was named Niantic and the other Framingham, the latter having a Fort Riley annex, and maybe these roads are not jammed with all sorts of troops, teams, trucks, etc., why, the parade one sees some days makes Barnum's old show seem like corn stalk league stuff. Surely after this war, circuses and fairs will have to develop some thrillers to get the twinkle of an eyelash out of this A. E. F. bunch, for it is free to all here, save of late the Allemande bunch have been paying quite heavily. This old blood and thunder hospital bombing stuff goes away below par when the old Yanks get started after the Boche, why they only laughed at those Huns this last scrap. There is nothing on wheels that can ever stop this Amex dwarf army now.

Pardon me just a minute, Big John Smith has just come in, transferred back to us, send a note to the mess sergeant to draw rations for ten extra men tout de suite, and Corp. Morrell is putting up a notice on the board. Say listen, what do you think it was? Us fellows have finally got our orphans. Yep, sure enough, look who is here, Marie Louise Decollas, age 11, and Paul Maillard, age 6. Welcome to our dugout. Parson Davis is already appointed their Godfather. You know girls, we don't really have them with us here, just their pictures, the kids themselves are home with their parents, or I should say their Mothers, for each of their daddies have been called upon to make the supreme sacrifice in this cruel war. The Red Cross handle the money, we just support them for one year. We are trying to get some pictures to send them to you, cannot of course send these first photos, as they are company property. A. E. F. boys have taken 500 orphans.

Our commanding officer was sent to the hospital several days ago and the Lieutenant, whose picture I sent to you in my last letter, has been in charge. By the way, before we forget it, everyone wants to be remembered to "Loot" Nagle.

Well, we will be gum swizzled, here comes Corp. Deutsch with another 200 from the Comfort Club. Well this is our second two hundred, Lieut. Sprague did not endorse it, but we will nail him soon and anyhow there isn't any one up here to cash it, but just wait till we get back to that two months rest in the rear ? ? ? ? ? some of you have written of, then it will come in handy, shall pay all men a share that are in our company now, that were with us our last day at Niantic. We will have to leave the transferred men to you. Speaking of the

last days at Niantic, reminds us of the day at Halifax when the wounded Tommies near a hospital there said to us, "Oh, you belong to the R. A. C., (rob a comrade) boys." Well, I am frank to admit we have a couple of 32nd degree souvenir hunters, I guess they will get into any company.

Whoa ,there goes the artillery, the drive is on, and they said the 13th was unlucky, oh boy, it sure was for the Boche. They may call it an ordered retreat, but from the shell holes around here, they wouldn't have had to order us the second time; like seconds on pie we would have heard them the first time. Don't like to compliment our opponent too much, but beaucoup of them lying around here surely died with their boots on. All your boys have had wonderful experiences and seen many very interesting things of late. It seems like a trip to Germany, in fact it is Germany since 1870. All have some souvenirs to send home, have eaten Boche black bread, each loaf dated, drank their soda water, used their paper bandage, postcards, etc., and we are even playing captured records on the Victrola. By the way we had a picture taken of the Victrola the other day, while it was playing some of the new German music and we had dolled it up with its two service stripes. We will send this to you or perhaps direct to the Graphophone Company, if all those good looking girls over there will be real nice and keep their noses all powdered up good for the next couple of weeks.

Francolini and Marsten have had some great experiences, Calamity Murphy has made a fine man to send as a litter bearer, only he has to cover his nose, so as not to give the positions away, and by the way, Pomeroy and Northrop have a good deal to say about New Milford and claim two men recently had the roofs of their mouths sun burned from looking at the tall buildings there. Please find out if there is such a place, and if so, when it was annexed to America.

Someone has said that all is fair in love and war, and we think it must be, for outside the Kaiser, the meanest man in Europe is the artillery guy that untied three perfectly good horses from another company's picket line and left three saddle sore crowsates in their stead one night recently.

Say, aren't those Wanamaker Liberty Bell writing stations just the thing, wish there were more of them. Mail from home is better than medicine and especially if one is just going up. We also appreciate the Defence Council work for us.

May I offer a few suggestions about mail, the following things have been or should be barred as joy killing stuff:



Pictures of Fairfield Beach,  
Quilty's dance programs and  
All menu cards and mention of feeds.

The recent drive has cheered the boys up fine, 'twas a regular picnic, why we haven't had so much fun since someone hit Honeck on the bald head with the hunk of butter the last day we ate at the Fairfield restaurant.

Just a word about Rumors. **Nail 'em on the head.** Every man in this company has been reported either wounded or sick. Someone has little to do, to make one's friends worry more than they do.

We are at present living in German barracks. German captured water wagons, bicycles, trucks, etc., are going by, being driven by Yanks. One new lad in our outfit from Colorado. Stranger says, "Say, boy, where's this Yankee division from?" "Oh, the New England States and Colorado," says he.

Will send some paper that looks like crepe paper, but which is captured German paper bandage, also a diagnosis card, a sheet from one of their calendars and also address this letter with their ink. Will have to hand it to them on their eggs, for each one is stamped with a serial number.

A fellow has just called me Irving Cobb, then explained that he didn't mean that I wrote anything like him, but that I was most as good looking. Well, can you beat that? I'm through.

DICK BARLOW.

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## EIGHTH LETTER.

October 1st, 1918.

Good afternoon, Ladies:—

Anyone in the house that loves out-door life, please fall in and we will take a stroll over the hills near us. Sure bring the men folks along, have a Hun cigar or cigarette, gentlemen. We will walk slow and you girls look out and don't tear your skirts on this old barb wire. You see back of us a few miles is what used to be No Man's Land. I say back, for recently this Amex gang got out their mops and had one of those old fashioned "clean up" days and they made this "Yankee Land." Now I wouldn't swear what started those American boys to play so rough, but they say a dough boy received a letter from someone in the good old U. S. A., that you were going to tap all the Pro Germans, so he and his gang started out on a little party, but friend Hun he went so fast all they could do was to tap his shoes

with 30-30's. Why they didn't even stop to finish their steins of beer and some even went without underwear, the Crown Prince in the lead. Yep, he sure is a great leader alright, that is when they are going out. Gee, his papa was so riled at his little pet, that he put him to bed thout supper and tore his best red kimona all up in little pieces.

Here vegetation is alive, and see, the grass is green, foliage is on the trees, even daisies, wild carrots and now and then a toad. Yes, that's where a 155 landed, see the pieces of shrapnel in the bottom and look at those trees. People say, "Why don't the men get behind the trees?" Well just count them up, there's at least six knocked down just ahead of you that are at least 42 stouts, as they say in D. M. Read's.

Just look at the view over the hills, you can see for miles and miles. Now do you believe that anyone can realize the vast areas that troops must cover, unless one has actually seen it? Those small holes, oh, they are where 75's hit and look at that old 88 over there, see those red boxes of stuff in the barrel, well that's dynamite, only they didn't get time to set it off. That's right, Mr. Wheeler, cut a cane, one needs them here, especially at night, we call 'em trench sticks. This is quite a hill alright, and I guess we are going a little too fast, for there are Mrs. Beach and Mrs. Sprague back quite a ways. Oh, Mr. Soldier, look at all those dugouts. Gracious, aren't they smashed? Do shells burst concrete and iron girders like that? Yes, dear people, it does. On this next hill is a regular sleeping metropolis of dugouts and the whole hillside is tunnelled. Guess they expected to stay another four years. Now we are on the crest of the hill and there is No Man's Land in front of you. You com-pre, No Man's Land must be different on every front. Sometimes it is a steep hill, then again it is a valley, but here is the real old type you see pictured most. You know the old ones, no vegetation, trees shot off in what was a forest, not a tree over three inches in diameter left standing and not a green leaf, shell holes and trenches and more trenches. Why as we poke about here, one feels like W. A. H. Hatfield estimating the damage after the Burrit fire.

Just over there is where Earl Carter and Jim O'Connell bought that two acres of land you heard of. Yes, they have it roped off, and friend Hun has already dropped a couple of 210's into it for them so they won't have much of a cellar to dig, when they start their home for ex Crowned heads. We know these folks will like these surroundings for they have spent years planning them for someone else to live in and just so as not to let them forget the big war altogether, they are go-

ing to leave a 75 near by to whang out the time of day every half hour, like a ship's bell.

Did you notice that there is no smell here like there was at the last front? Why our gang had so few casualties, that one chaplain had a funeral service on a hillside for a fallen comrade and they are not coming very fast when they can do this, and that service did us good, too.

See that sign about "Strengsten Verboten" guess the dough boys didn't study Hun at school, for we found a couple of dead ones behind the door and had to bury 'em. They sure did go "Backward Mit Gott" through here. Of course, this has been a dandy chance for some of our boys to send a little note to some reporter friend of theirs, not giving a rap about getting their names in the paper, but just to let him know they were sitting on the barbed wire in No Man's Land, with one pounders peppering at 'em, that's the impression some seem to want to create. Why I saw a picture of a lad the other day in one of our local papers, telling of his being gassed, shrapnelled, whizzbanged, shot with an air craft rifle, etc., etc., can only say if he was gassed, it must have been done by telephone.

Hope you will pardon me for having mentioned No Man's Land so many times, rest assured I have not meant it in a boastful way. We surely never could have taken this hike together, if the dough boys and leathernecks hadn't made it possible, they are the ones to credit. Any dough boy can have the shirt off this man's back any time he says the word. No gamer men ever lived.

Well let's wander back down the other road, down past the narrow gauge railroad, where the ammunition was brought up. See the ladder work up in the trees where the sniper's post was and over there are two dummy guns to fool the airplanes, look almost like those that used to be in Lyon and Grumman's window. That long belt of bullets, oh, that goes through a machine gun. Yes, those are the gas masks, helmets, boots, rifles, canteens, etc., that they used and had to leave behind. Notice their shovels with a nice round knob on the handle. I'll be gum-swizzled, if they wouldn't be fine for your street department men, they wouldn't ever slip out of their arm pits.

Down on that high hill over there one can see for miles, on every side in a complete circle, the landscape, and not a mountain or hill to obstruct his view at any one point. Did you ever see a place like that in the States? we never did. Don't get us wrong now, for when fini the guerre is a reality we won't be in no back row when passes for home are given out. Nearest we ever came to equalling this view was at Mt. Tom. Is it far?



Let's walk up. Oh, no, it's not so far, but shells drop over occasionally and they know just what they left here and know that over there is the only place to get water for miles around, so naturally there must be quite a few horses about at least, so he lets one come over now and then.

Well, we are most home now, so come up and see the dug-outs and barracks they built for us, and Gilbert will show you one of those greyish black sweaters that so many of the fellows found here. Oh yes the Hun Red Cross women didn't know it at the time, but they knitted quite a bit for us. Yes, Mam, that's a Red Cross station down there and say who do you think is in there? Donahue of Milford, and you know we stick around these Red Cross lads like the editor of the Newtown Bee at a church supper, and when they give out any chocolate or cookies, or gum, what I mean, we're not much further back in line than Gus Hannan and Jake Ahearn used to sit of a Saturday night down at the Park. Did you see the book we found here? "Die Experimentelle Bakteriologie und die Infektions etc., etc.," and by Gollies, it's a vonder, haven't found a mistake in it yet.

What are those men doing around that table in the next room? Oh, they are having a game of checkers (*deux soos*) and have just opened up some of that "Sons of Vets" *terbaccer*. No, I do not know what those other men mean, that are bent over there and are muttering something about "Baby needs a pair of shoes"; each and every member is allowed three guesses and prizes given every Tuesday.

By George, we didn't tell you about Loot Durham's Y. M. C. A. Well you see twas just like this, there were two Y. M. men in a Ford, when they got ditched, so some officers bought them out at a sacrifice sale and sold the things to us, first come first served, men from all companies horned in, and the doughboys, thinking that it was a regular Y. M., bawled them all out for further orders for not havin' nothin' any good, and Esben got all mixed up with the change, for you see there's troops from all lands here and each has a little money from his own country. Any lad that hasn't at least money from seven nations, ain't no account a tall. Anyway we will admit the candy wasn't very good and let us say right here, if that rule ever goes through, that us guys are to get a half pound of real American chocolate every ten days as a government issue, well, don't snitch, girls, but we know one lad that's going to sneak off in some corner like a Frog with a bottle of pinaud.

Whoa, here's some mail just come in, look what's here, some real old Australian official ballots for us soldier lads. Sure

we all voted alright and some wanted to vote again, but they said they wasn't giving out no seconds, but 'twas a pretty tame election, for no one was around to shake hands, say "ride in my car, and see you tonight, and you know me Bill." Not a Danny Walker around, and Mortensen was mixed up, thought John Boyle was going to run for Governor this year, and Chas. Morgan said "H——, no, that's Bill Brady of Black Rock, you mean." Think most of the fellows voted prohibition for "Beers, Just or Unjust," we heard a great many voters in the good old U. S. were learning to be tailors, at least they were going to make the saloons close.

Just a minute, ladies, here's Bud Palmer with more mail. Bill Adams writes that he is coming fine and to hold his service record, as he will be back soon, and Walter Scott writes that he will be back any day now. Foley was only getting his glasses anyway, and Thompson his ears fixed up. We hear that Charlie Johnson and Ralph Hull are back with you again, if it be true please remember us to them,

I can see that Mrs. Stratton and Mrs. Forsyth are getting a little uneasy about getting home in time to have supper ready for those men folks. Well, drop in again, we have enjoyed it, but guess you find this missile, or is it missive, about asspicy and interesting as the Congressional Record or the Farm Journal, but wait till I find a Hun typewriter as a souvenir, then I will "snap it up" as the top sergeant talks about. Sure they have already given me a little Hun machine gun cart to drag it around with.

Now about us coming home, don't get excited, I don't mean right off, certainly not till our two months' vacation we are on is over, but when we do come, let us say, never mind getting out the Fairfield Silver Cornet Band to play welcome home, or any of that stuff, for Heinie has furnished music enough. But say, better warn the kids not to holler "Duck" as we go by, for if they do you ain't going to have no parade a tall. And if any of your lads, on going out of a Saturday night, sticks a can of corned bill into his pocket, don't laugh at him, for it's just force of habit to have emergency rations along. All a fellow has to do, if he thinks he's lost over here, is to watch for tin cans along the road and he is sure the A. E. F. gang is ahead somewhere. We certainly do appreciate it that you good people in America are denying yourselves so that we can have plenty to eat, but it seems sometimes that altogether too many were saving us the aforesaid W. K. stuff, (Beer's stuff)

Yes, George Dubee still holds the record for being able to skootch more of his anatomy under a steel stetson than any-

one else in the outfit, all you can see of him is his right knee, and Goodnow has added to his record of changing a rear shoe and a spark plug at the same time, and now cooks doughnuts in the back of his car during a barrage.

Say, girls, just another minute before you go home, what do you think. We met Lieut. Powers and only two towns away from us at that, he looks fine too. And you know Bob Stewart has been sent to an Auto School. Just wait till he hollers "Right Dress" down there and all the shingles come off the roof, then they'll know Bridgeport is on the map. Yep, and Pratt and Whitney have offered to send us some nice kits, sure send em along P and W, ain't we the luckiest kids? By Golly, this sure is some gang of yours, for two lads out in front now have a French cootie and a German louse on a metal mirror, siking 'em on one another. Can you beat that?

Sit up close, girls, say who the deuce is telling this stuff about lots of the Amex boys marrying French girls? We have been around these diggins some months now and have yet to hear of a single case. Why it's just as Bill Cowie says, "What would a fellow write to one, only bon Jour and Avez vous des oeufs?"

Wish the boys coming over here now, could be tipped off to put a good jackknife in their pockets and to get a watch. Radiolite is best, for we do as much nights as we do in the day.

Well, see you up at Danbury Fair. Gee, the Fall is here, hate to think of it, but it is nearing the time when we used to start to go to Sunday School so as to get n-orang. Now our mind is on Xmas. Say, wouldn't it be grand if we could exchange our mail privilege of getting two months old newspapers and have instead boxes sent to us, say up to two or three pounds?

And to those youngsters in the "Boy Scout Troops" let us say, "Be the lads your Mudder thinks you be."

You fellows and girls, who are giving your time and money to help all us lads we say, "You're a Brick, stick to it, the Kaiser can't."

Same old,

DICK BARLOW,

Sec. and Treas. Foreign Chapter,  
Bridgeport Comfort Club.

## NINTH LETTER.

November 3rd, 1918.

Hello Central,

Hello, Hello, I say,

Give me toll line, I want to talk to America.

Oui, Oui, toute de suite, monsieur,

Never mind the we, we stuff, Hello, Hello America, yes sure I want to. I want to talk to my Comfort Club girls at, Hello Bridgeport. What? You don't know me? Why I am that soldier fellow that was the guide on our hike over here, when you paid us that visit. Guess we didn't extinguish ourselves on that trip, for to have so many ladies around was so unusual, that we did not show you many things of interest. Why we even forgot Micky the Mope, our dog. Sure it is just a plain yellor dog, but we love him all the same, for there's not a drop of Deutsch-hound in him, though he has been more asleep than ever, since his best friend, Harry Monahan, went to get his broken wrist fixed up. No one knows just what breed Micky is, but Rip Morgan claims him to be a cross between a window shutter and the Gulf of Mexico.

By George, yes, and right down at the foot of the hill was Lieut. Sprague and his big steam cootie machine, that Jerry's observers must have taken for a tank, for they let go a few big ones pretty close to it and maybe that company of fellows, who were taking a bath at the time, didn't beat it over the hill, a la September morn.

We should have shown you the church, too, that was our dressing station. Gee, they had so many fires in it and smoke coming out most every window, that you probably would think it was one of Crane's foundries. Lands, yes, they had so much steam there, that it would have been foolish to ever put a bell on it, why not use a whistle.

It was just this way. Down there one day, there were two men working under their truck, when the first shell came over. Mr. Hough, he beat it. Joe yells, "Hey, Ned, come back here." Second shell goes whango. (Nothing said) third shell lands nearer. Oh boy, that Wynkoop fellow had passed Ned and was kicking two rabbits along that had started up in his path and so he says between breaths, "Gee Whiz, Bunnie, if you can't run, get out of the way, and let someone that can."

It seems as if most every place that friend Heinie has to leave in a hurry, we find large numbers of rabbits and we could not understand it at first, till one day, Lee Hull was driving by some artillery and he saw right away that a leather neck has to

be a good mathematician, so naturally has the rabbits for pets, for ain't they rapid multipliers? But the hard one to figure out was why some wearers of Sam Browns, that never got near a horse or mule, persist in wearing spurs, so one day Bert Keane and Mook Vennart were around in their motor cycles, and we asked them, and Mook says right away, "Hee Hee, to keep their feet from rolling off the desk."

Well, one that fooled us for a long time was, how a certain mule down in the valley below us always seemed to know before we did when ever there was gas in the air. So they kept watch down there and found that the mice around the picket line, on smelling the gas, would run up the legs of this old mule and this tickled him so. Oh say, maybe that mule couldn't bray, too. (There's a red flare up for Winsted.)

But what has that to do with the Boche wounded when they come in our place once in a while and Brendle, Weist, Kuhn, Davis, Nuss, Gilrich and Deutsch all start parley vooing Dutch to them so fast they must think they are in the old Fatherland, and another place this same bunch used to shine, was when they had their favorite fruit, saurkraut, for supper.

Well, we stayed in towns a while longer, not much doing, only Radikin had a letter fom his rich Uncle, what lives on the main stem down at Noo York, and saying to be sure and fetch him some souvenir home. Now, Rad, he thought at first of a nice wheel off a 210 for Uncle's watch fob, till one day he and Crump were going down the road in that chariot of theirs and Rad he spots one of those little dinkey engines. Ah, just the thing. Yes, he brought it back all hunkadory, hooked it right off the track with his front fender.

Once in a while the Kamerad boys would send over a flock of Krupp calling cards up on the hill near our place, till we thought maybe they were laying a metal carpet on those lots, but they were only wasting good money, like the man with the palsied arm did, when he bought the wound chevrons for his six sons.

Now lately, most every mess, some officer would come around and read us some letters from the jigadier brindles in the A. E. F. about the work we were doing and you know we had had that taffy pulled on us before, so we knew that before long we would be on our way. No, not to a rest camp, but to another front and sure enough we did, and right away they posted a big long list of our fellows that had been cited in recent orders, but I am not going to mention them all here, as every man in the company did his best.

Don't forget either, folks, that after the war, Newtown's



ballot will read, Hub Beers, Mayor; Jimmy Peck and Jesse James, Sheriff and Constable, respectively. Gosh, you know when Jim first heard those peace flutterings from the peace doves, he says right away, "Well, I hope they send us home in one of those concrete boats, for my old man had a steam boat up home and you couldn't tip er over."

Vernon Peck he had to go back to the hospital again.

By Golly, that old saying, that everything comes to him who waits, came true alright, for on October 11th, we were paid thirty francs each from the Pershing Fund money that you good people raised last Fourth of July. Someone must have had the back gears thrown in on that money, till it began to look like one of those deferred payment policies, but anyway we have it and we want to thank you that had any part in it.

Up at this place where we received the money, in one of the field hospitals near us, was a British Tommy, in all his regalia. We looked up his case and found that by a mistake of some clerk, he was sent from a classification camp to F. H. No. 100-A. E. F. instead of F. H. No. 100-B. E. F., and for two months he had to stay there, and the best of it was, he was writing home to his mother that he didn't mind it and had gained several pounds. Well she didn't worry, for she thought he meant in weight.

A few days later who do you think we met? You'd never guess, so I will tell you. It was Sergt. Riley, of the U. S. of America and France. Isn't he a brick? One couldn't help but like him and he sure likes you folks and is mighty proud of Bridgeport. Oh yes, he told us all about you, that your Comfort Club was the only one of its kind in the East, and anyway we know it is the best one. He sure got a gang of snickers out of this bunch when he said you folks in America called the Naval Reserves "The Ladies of the Lake."

Yes, Mam, it is true that Frank Deutsch is a sergeant, and so are Jimmy Morrell and Hughey Lawlor, but don't hold it against them, for some sergeants are alright, and listen folks, don't make the terrible mistake of addressing mail to Mortensen, Swartz or Vanlindingham as Privates So-and-So, for they are real honest to goodness corporals now and are to be obeyed and respected as such. Oh no, you do not have to salute them. Mort didn't know what to do at first as he couldn't get any chevrons, so now they rip off their two service stripes, turn 'em up side down and they loom up fine, too.

Walter Scott is back with us from the hospital, but Mars-ten had to go in on account of his rheumatism and Bob



MacDonald from exhaustion, also the fellow I referred to in our very first letter.

We want also to thank you and the Telegram for your efforts in regard to our drill money. The fault was our own, as the Telegram proves, our clerks were not onto their jobs, so now we are going to get some old National Guard vouchers, if possible and may get it yet.

We have tried and tried to think of some suggestions to send you in regard to things to put in those 3x6x9 packages and every one has different ideas, and anyway they are too small for a pie or one of Ma's chocolate walnut cakes, but here's a thing I am sure would make a hit. If you, by hook or crook, could get hold of some of those slips of paper that Uncle Sam gives out that makes a fellow promenade up to Meigs and get a blue serge suit and a derby hat, then throw his khaki in the nearest manhole, why just slide some in, down in one corner of the box, and if your name doesn't go down in the Hall of Fame, then the Kaiser ain't eating goose for Thanksgiving, for we cooked his for him over a month ago.

Jerry's gang doesn't seem to make good as bird fanciers, for just when he had his peace doves all trained and ready to go out to each nation and wrap the world all up in a little pink ribbon, why someone gums the works and the one that lit in the good old U. S. A. turned out to be a game rooster, and to cap the climax, I'll be gum swizzled, if his turkey hasn't flew the coop.

Lieut. Comfort, of New Haven, always was a regular fellow to us, but now he is the most popular man in this A. E. F. (All Excellent Fellows) gang, for he turned that captured Boche ambulance over to our company and Goodnow is running it and Corp. Davis was reduced to a private at his own request, just to be an orderly on it.

Sorensen, Watt, Francolini, Murphy, Smith and Brodsky have all been transferred as medical men to the infantry, but we see them often as they are near by.

This sure is a fine old world to live in just at present, for things of world wide interest follow one another in such rapid succession that no one can figure out just what the next few hours will bring to light, and this is the kind of life the average Yank likes and like Barnum's Circus, that silver lining to this old war cloud is looming up bigger and better all the time, but don't quit or get excited, stick to your knittin' folks, till the full count of ten over old Bill, then we can rest assured of the absolute finish of that "Me und Gott" corporation. And when the time comes for us to depart to America and that gal with the

old style flare outside New York welcomes us home, why our spirits will be so high, we can just let the boat coast down hill from there in and as we pass that Island, we are going to drop off a detail of two men to whisper in her ear, that although she is a nice girl and we like her, if she ever sees us again, she will have to throw up very many lights and then do an about face and even then she may get answered with a hob nail barrage.

Come on, come on, Old Man, rise and shine, Oh there's Cockerton, it's reveille again for

DICK BARLOW,  
Sec. and Treas., Foreign Chapter,  
Bridgeport Comfort Club.

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### TENTH LETTER.

November, 1918.

Just a few after thoughts to my letter of the Third.

Some spoke of sending money or useful things to our Connecticut boys, who are prisoners in Germany. I find that the Red Cross are to send each one a package for Xmas, 6x9x11, I believe the law allows them, and also their friends can send them one package a month. So what we have talked of is to send the Home Office of the Red Cross at Paris, say 200 francs, to help them pay for the things they send the boys in prison camps, and as soon as I get back to the company, I shall try to have the boys let me do this.

Also someone has spoken of getting the size of the clothes that our orphans wear. It can't be did, for we'll say shoes for instance, a man's shoes over here are numbers 41 to 45. The best way to do would be to send small amounts of money at different times and let the mothers do as they think best. Little Marie, whom I saw, is rather small for eleven, and rather frail, while not sickly or serious, still her little sad face does not bespeak the best of health. You know the money the Red Cross gives the children, that was raised by different companies in the A. E. F., is not lumped, but dished out either weekly or monthly, and this does not allow for very much misuse. Marie Louise's Mother is a very rugged woman, I should say about thirty-five, and has one younger child who is a little cross-eyed, but very strong, more like the mother. Mrs. Decollas seemed to wonder what she should do after the boys went home or our year was up, so I shall try and remember and no doubt our gang will be glad to remember our kids, when the right time comes.

When we divide our money which the Comfort Club has sent us, we shall pay the recently transferred men, that I mentioned in my last letter, as they were with us when we received the next to the last check, and we haven't cashed that as yet.

And I want to say right now that I am proud to be a member of a bunch of boys that are of such a calibre that they have gone ahead conscientiously and made a name for themselves, and after all we are only just what our Mothers made us, for there are more of these boys who say that little childhood prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep" than you would ever think there were, and as they do their thoughts are lifted home-ward and to their good Mothers, the fundamental bedrock of a nation.

Some twenty or more men direct from God's Country have been sent to our company, seven of them had not been paid in from two to five months, so the boys had me give them 10 francs each from our funds.

Lieut. Sprague is in command of an ambulance company next to ours now. Wish it could have been ours.

SAME OLD DICK,  
102nd Ambulance Company

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### ELEVENTH LETTER.

"Sarrey, France,  
Dec. 16, 1918.

"Afternoon Folks:—

"As I promised, may I try and tell you how a soldier, was handled after being wounded and gassed. Let's start back along in October, after we had left the St. Mihiel 'sector' and we were most into the city of Verdun. We had heard so much of the terrible fighting that had taken place there, that we were surprised to see the city in such good condition, especially the southern end of it.

"The cathedral and girls' seminary, although shattered, were still standing. A wireless tower and also large three or four stone barracks, one mile from the city, where we were billeted were still standing. These last buildings, previous to the war, were used as a great artillery school by the French and outside of a few good sized air holes seemed very little damaged. The infantry were billeted over in the great citadel absolutely bomb proof, if that be possible, regular underground city, clean white tunnels running in all directions as far as the eye could carry, people going in, horses pulling narrow gauge

cars of supplies in and out, stores, etc., all below the ground.

"Heinie had been driven so far away now, that only a stray long distance shell now and then came into the city, just a reminder that Jerry still had the range of the city on their old artillery score board.

"Well, when it came our turn to go up we were sent to a point some 10 or 15 kilometers away and known as Death Valley. This was sure our worst front. Men that won honors at the Chemin des Dames and the Toul front, only went through a Sunday School picnic at Beardsley Park compared to this.

"Now just a word about those shells Jerry used to send over. What I mean there were beaucoup of them at times, and oh yes, of course, we ourselves threw over a few, too. Shells can almost be compared to persons in some ways, for they each have their different characteristics. Some men walk up and swat you, some make a lot of noise about it and some don't, while others make a lot of noise and don't swat you. Now an Austrian '88' sneaks up behind a fellow without saying a word, then whizz bang! It's away down in the seat of your breeches before it says a word and when you get up off your stomach if there isn't a first aid man working on you, why it missed you. Go ahead and try to make the next dug-out.

"Now what they call a G. I. can, one of those old big babies, comes across, whish whash, whash whish, as if it was a hogshead of molasses going over, why they seem to go so slow and to fairly hang in the air, as you lie there on your back, in a little place you have dug in the bank, and when those babies let go, oh boy, the air is full of stove lids, monkey wrenches and everything up to an upright piano. A gas shell? Oh, they don't make much noise, just a little 'putt,' like opening a bottle of (well, whatever you ordered), but those blamed things hang around and hang around. Oh, they are mean cusses, and you know those shells with the timers on 'em, remember the one with that alarm clock dingus on the bow and a lot of little numbers all scattered around loose like, that are supposed to get so many certain numbered Yanks. A lot of fellows were lucky and must have drawn blanks, for every once in a while a 'dud' comes over, throws up a lot of dirt, but does nothing only scare a man half to death.

"Sometimes you are between Jerry and our own artillery and each side is putting over a pretty good barrage and so many shells go singing over, high in the air. Sure they sing about and rather enjoy it. and it seems you could almost see them as they pass the moon and there are so many of them up

there, it seems some of them must 'head on,' for surely there are no M. P.'s up there.

"Pardon me, I am getting away from my text. Shells seem as gentle as can be, as they lie along side the road with only a wooden or cork plug to keep their noses clean—the leather-necks 'treat them rough' so it almost scares you, but when they pull those plugs out and put in those timers, they act as nervous as can be and jump at the least excitement. Why just the sight of a gunner pulling a lanyard they will jump terrible distances, and just as you think they have taken it as a joke they will burst into an awful wrath and fly all over the nearest body of men and they don't show any partiality about it either. Generals and K. P.'s all look the same to them.

"Now if any variety of these shells has happened to get you, the nearest first aid man will fix you up, and the litter bearers will carry you back, but if you are able 'beat it' yourself for the nearest dressing station. And the chances are you have been wallowing around in the mud for the last 10 days and all the while your beard has been growing and you look a dead ringer for Billy Watson or Lew Welsh. Here they will fix you up, put a tag on you, and as soon as the shelling lets up the litter-bearers will carry you down to the road where an ambulance is waiting, or if you can walk, you surely must do so, for here is where every man must show the most stuff he has in him.

"Well, cut that old float loose, there, Goodnow, all are ready. Away she goes down the road, two litter patients and six or eight sitting; every once in a while Heinie drops one over on the road and you may get another wound on the way in, for they love a Red Cross flag like a bull loves a red flag. Well you hang on for dear life, for the car is going over shell holes galore, with once in a while the legs or neck of a dead horse or mule thrown in. Then when you have made the ambulance company dressing station you can get your wound redressed if it needs it, leave your pack, rifle, and all equipment, except the toilet articles you need at the hospital and all? the money you have,

"They give you a cigarette or cup of cocoa, and record you in their books, put you in another ambulance, for the car that fetched you has already gone back for another load, and this has been the work your boys have done for the last 10 months, litter bearing to the ambulances, driving ambulance to the dressing stations and dressing wounds at the station.



"Off we go to the field hospital, which usually is really a sifting station. That is, gassed men are sent to one hospital, sick and wounded to others. Gassed men are bathed there, their hair cut short, other clothes are given you, and slightly wounded or sick, that can be returned to duty in a few days, are held here.

"All the rest go on to some base hospital near the railroad and from there are forwarded to all the great hospitals in France, aboard those real American hospital trains, that have engines on them with an honest to goodness whistle and a slightly hump-backed sneaky look about it, as though it was going to get somewhere once it got started. All aboard, two in a berth, sleep head to feet, and in the day time fold up the bunk into a nice comfortable seat.

"Heads up, by Golly, there is an American Red Cross nurse coming through, and you catch yourself staring at her in a half worshipping way, for you hain't been seeing many women folks for months. Then the fellow that feeds us comes around and those poor cusses all along the sides that are litter patients, they try to switch around into half comfortable propped up positions, so that they can manage, then someone hollers something about a duck and we who have been fetched up in the country and not having spent any time in a hospital, we gaped out the window looking for ducks, but we soon "ketched on" that it wasn't birds they meant.

"After a while you reach your destination. Perhaps it is Paris, maybe it's Limoges, or even Bordeaux. All out, and once inside Base "oughty-ought," you get a bath and they rig you out in pajamas, all colors, styles, and sizes, some fellows looked like prisoners, some like the wrestlers. Bill Adams used to bring on down at the Y. M. C. A. But girls, when they put you in one of those sure to goodness B-E-D-S, with sheets, pillows, 'en everything,' and this is the first time you have had your clothes off in a month, and you snuggle down out of sight, you mutter something to the nurse about burning up your clothes for the war must be over.

"But as you lie there day after day, your mind goes back and the tears come to your eyes for those lads that you had bunked and buddied with and you knew were better than you, but they were bumped off, and must lie forever in a grave far from their loved ones. And, then as you improve, Heinie signs the armistice and you know you are a lucky fellow to have come out of the war alive, and you feel and know that with all its hardships you are a bigger, better, more tenderhearted man for having come over here.



"Just a moment! Are there any cornfeds in the house? If there is, please stand up, thank you. Say remember when you and I were on the farm and the rooster used to crow in the morning, then down the road or over across the lot, half a dozen other roosters would keep answering his challenge, well it sure got a laugh out of us when the rooster in the next yard to the hospital heard the French engine whistling around the freight yard, and mistaking them for other roosters, kept crowing all the morning

"Once you get so you can get around, you begin to long to get back to the old bunch again and you whisper something in some 'Loot's' ear about fixing it up so you can get back to your outfit, and he tells you, 'Sure, Buddy, I can fix it up so that you will go straight back,' and you fall for it, and away you go to the classification camp, where you get fitted up with all equipment. They sure have some system here. Why about six lines go in all at once, walk right along down the line, just hold out your arms and the first fellow you pass throws a shelter half at you, the next a blouse, another a shirt and so it goes, tent pins, pole, leggings, belt, cap, etc., all come flying out of the air and as you pass the last lad, he drops in an extra pair of hobnails, then you put your John Hancock on a slip of paper and out the back door you go. Some fellows only had half their things, when a whistle blew and all the clerks quit for dinner, like in a shop at home. All you can do is to stand and wait a half hour or more, curse under your breath about the blue button S. O. S. birds, for back here all the fellows attached to camps of this kind must wear a blue button on their caps.

"Next chow call blows and you fall in line, four abreast, two or three thousand all go through the same mess hall and usually you are fed inside of a hour, then fall in line and wash mess kits. Maybe there's 50 ahead of you, and then if you happen to have been lucky and have a few francs that you haven't spent for 'vin blink' or lost in a crap game, why you can get in line at the Y. M. C. A. or commissary. As soon as we are all set, they start us for our companies—(only they don't)—for you wind up at one of those so called 'rest camps' and here you get held up, two, three and maybe four weeks. No passes, no mail, and you don't know a soul out of the five or six thousand that are here.

Once in a while someone comes around and fills you up about going home as a casual and you fall for it and figure that next Friday you will go out to one of those Comfort Club meetings. Then you pack up and go back to your company. Oh,

ain't it a grand and glorious feeling! You read your mail, look over your old barracks bag that has just been returned after having been stored all summer—you find one of those red-cross sweaters, and some postal cards of Liffol that the censor wouldn't let us send. (But he is getting to be a pretty good fellow of late).

"And Lieut. Sprague has been made a captain and the fellows are coming back every day from the hospitals already included Hannon, O'Connell, Wyrzten, Widinghoff, Marsten, Foley, Adams, Davis, Ferris and Dickens. Yes, and there are some of our old trench fever boys back with us again, Good. Hello, Worley, Lambert, Willis, Schaeffer, Elliano, Watkins, Murphy and Vassel, and if there isn't Louis Hough. Well, I swan, it looks like old times, even have wooden barracks, just like we did at Liffol last winter. All the boys had received their checks and Pop Brendle, Harry Edes, Hub Beers, Ralph Carleton and Sergt. Lieberum are away on permission, look for heavy casualties in the French papers especially among the mademoiselles, for that combination will sure knock 'em dead.

"What do you know, we were not in the army of Occupation. Since we left 'em at Verdun, we were shifted over to the right and fell into it soft, had a dandy big dugout, large enough for the entire company, even electric lights and running water. Some luck. But it was too good to last, for soon after the armistice was signed we started on a ten day hike, and I'll be switzed if we didn't wind up away down here near Langres, in the little town of Sarrey, where every little home makes the dandiest hand made knives and scissors one could wish to see.

"On reaching here there was a check of one hundred dollars waiting for us, that the Sons of Veterans had sent and two days later a check from the Comfort club. Hey, Bill Larson, will you go down to that little store and see if you can buy a clothes basket? We have no lights in the barracks, so buy candles with the money you have sent us, also matches, cigarettes, scrubbing brushes, a meat cutter for the kitchen, extra cans of milk. Each man in our company we have given five francs as a little Xmas present, and have also sent a Xmas present of 25 francs each to our two orphans.

"We have only two ambulances now, Banks and McElroy on one and Pinney and Mills on tother. Also our trucks have been turned in, so Ned Hough, Rip Morgan, Joe Wynkoop and Pomeroy all have to carry a pack for a change. Saturday we had a football game, lost out 6 to 0 to the 104th Ambulance company. Our line-up was Marsten, Merrill, Whitlinger, Wilcox,

Claire, McDonald, Waite, Wilk, Stewart, Worley, Bergeron and C. Morgan.

"Xmas boxes have not started to come in as yet, but here's hoping.

"All the boys have had blue Y. D.s sewed on the left sleeve of their blouses, also their two service stripes on the same sleeve, while quite a few have a wound stripe on the opposite sleeve, gassed counts as a wound.

"We hear quite a bit about that reception we are to have, but don't fuss much for us, just stand clear of the pantry door, that's all.

"Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year to all the world from the men of the 102nd Ambulance company.

"DICK BARLOW,

Secretary and Treasurer,

"Foreign Chapter,

"Bridgeport Comfort Club."

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November 29th, 1918.

The Bridgeport Comfort Club,  
Dear Mothers:—

Thank you for the most welcome gift received this date by us boys over here, I can assure you it has been appreciated by all. During the fifteen months in France, us boys have gone through it and have made good, the 102nd has gone over the top with the good old Y. D., 26th New England Division; but at the same time the Bridgeport Comfort Club has done the same, and in the eyes of the 102nd Ambulance Company, the Comfort Club has more than gone over for the 102nd Ambulance Company, the purely made in Bridgeport Organization.

Our ten months at the front has not been peaches and cream, as the boys would say, but we knew that a certain organization, away across the big pond, made up of the Mothers. Wives, Sisters and Sweethearts of the 102nd Ambulance Company boys, were back of us 'tous jours' and we knew that we had to make good with such wonderful support in the good old U. S. A. Thank you again. I remain, one of the boys of the 102nd Ambulance Company,

Sergeant JAMES W. MORRELL.

P. S.—Enclosed find one of the commendations received by this organizations, while in France, for our service.

Headquarters, 26th Division  
Office of Division Surgeon.

16th Nov., 1918.

FROM: Division Surgeon, 26th Division

TO: Officers and Men of the Ambulance Section, 101st  
Sanitary Train. (Thru C. O., 101st Sanitary Train.)

SUBJECT: Commendation

1. At the close of active operations, the writer feels under an agreeable obligation to express to you in the most sincere language he is capable of using, which is absolutely inadequate to the occasion, his congratulations on the superb service you have rendered.

2. The duties of the Ambulance Section are the backbone of the Divisional Medical Service, and if it had failed, no amount of effort or sacrifice on the part of the Division could have compensated.

3. You have been on the job and delivered the goods under all conditions and in spite of all handicaps. Your work has been a decisive factor in the successes of the Division.

4. There can be, and is, to my mind, no finer organization in the A. E. F. than the Ambulance Section of the 101st Sanitary Train. You are absolutely the Corps d'Elite of the Division, and I feel that there is nothing I can do or say for you individually and collectively that half expresses my deep feelings on the subject.

5. You can have the proud consciousness of having performed to the tip-top of efficiency your important share of the campaign that has led to America's victory, may you succeed as well at home in the pursuits of peace.

(Signed) R. S. PORTER,

Colonel, N. C.,

Division Surgeon

RSP e

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In a recent scene of action, this division won back considerable land which has for the past four years been held by the Huns. While we were there, or rather just before we left there to advance, we noticed the church bells ring for the first time since we had been there. Several of our French-speaking troops spoke about it to the French soldiers in that town and we were told that it was the first time that they had rung in four years. There were no civilians in the town, but under the circumstances the French soldiers will ring the bell at the times it is supposed to be rung until the civilians come back to live there. The French are very religious you know, and that is

their custom; to ring the bells whether there is anyone living there or not. There was a Cure (a French Priest) who had lived there nearly all the time to hold services for the soldiers there and after our successful work there, he wrote the following letter, which I will censor myself, to our Commanding General (General Edwards).

Name of town,  
September 13, 1918.

"Sir,

Your gallant twenty-sixth American division has just set us free. Since September 1914, the barbarians have held the heights of the Meuse, have foully murdered three hostages from Mouilly, have shelled Rupt, and, on July 23, 1915, forced its inhabitants to scatter to the four corners of France.

I, who remain at my little listening post upon the advice of my Bishop, feel certain, Sir, that I do but speak for the Monseigneur Ginisty, Lord Bishop of Verdun, my parishioners of Rupt, Mouilly, and Genicourt and the people of this vicinity in conveying to you and your associates the heartfelt and unforgettable gratitude of all.

Many of your comrades lie at rest in our truly Christian and French soil. Their ashes shall be cared for as if they were our own. We shall cover their graves with flowers and shall kneel by them as their own families would do, with a prayer to God to reward with eternal glory these heroes fallen on the field of honor, and to bless the twenty-sixth division and generous America.

Be pleased, Sir, to accept the expression of my profound respect.

(Signed) A. LECLERC,  
Cure of \_\_\_\_\_."



## TWELFTH LETTER

Marigne, Sarthe, France,  
27 Kilos to Le Mans,  
March 15, 1919.

Dear Friends:—

Have not written you since the New Year, as we had hoped that before now we would be promenading on the main stem of the old town, renewing acquaintances, looking over the new things of interest, such as the new Stratford Avenue bridge, the bath house at Seaside, the bank buildings, etc., that have been completed since we went away. There has been very little doing of late and we did not intend to write further, but our turn does not seem to come very fast, and most everyone is getting some sort of a permission and it is about these that I want to tell you.

This like my trip to the hospital, is not that it is I but the fact that hundreds of other fellows are having the same experience that may make it of interest.

First let me give you some ancient history, then work along up to the present time. After President and Mrs. Wilson, General Pershing and some others had visited us at Sarrey and Bob Stewart had showed them our billet and explained everything to them except a couple of places where we had camouflaged some dirty clothes, and Mrs. Wilson had made a hit with us by saying that we were some of the boys she had been praying for and we had promised that gentleman with the most radiant smile we had ever seen, that we would sure pay back the visit, we then on Jan. 3rd packed up and moved from Sarrey, (pronounced Sorry, only we wasn't,) down 12 kilometers to the little town of Baine, still in Haute Marne. We stayed there about three weeks. We had a track meet on Jan. 11th, our company winning out by four points over the 103rd. Pop Brendle was as usual our individual star, while Cater and Rice, two of our new men, showed up well in the races. That town was some ten kilometers from the city of Langres, which is a walled city set upon a hill and having a mountain climbing railway to get from its railway station up into the city. Our fellows used to hike to this city quite often.

Then on Jan. 21st we started to move again, some overland with full packs and others in some ambulances that had just been returned to us, the latter going clear through to this town near LeMans, while the rest hiked some 45 kilos in two days, slept outdoors all night, Jan. 23rd, away over at Vitrey,



while waiting to entrain, which we did at nine the next A. M. Won three box cars for our company, thirty men to a car. One was a Boche car that had just been turned over to France and was a pip,—heavy well made car, better than the usual French cars, and we have noticed hundreds of them since in the different freight yards and they are all well made.

We detrained at Ecommoy, hiked five kilos more to reach this nifty little burg of Marigne that we are still in and for once we are in luck, for it is no doubt the best town in the divisional area and the cleanest town we have been billeted in. We arrived here Jan. 25th and have hopes of going direct from here to our port of embarkation.

This town has only twelve to fifteen hundred population but during the war has had forty nine men killed and ten missing. They seem very pleased that we are here, and this being the apple section of France, why of course cider is trotted out for all favors, the seven saloons are open at all hours to civilians, but to members of the A. E. F. only from 10:30 to 1 and from 5 to 9, but no beer is or has been for sale and their hard stuff—cognac, eau de vie, pinaud and the rest—have too blamed much "authority" to them.

On arriving here we had ten G. M. C. ambulances and also two pairs of horses were handed over to us. Pomeroy pulled the ribbons over one pair while Ted Gilliland had the other. Two weeks later these horses were passed on to some other company and we were given six more ambulances, as our company must do all evacuation for the divisional area now, instead of each company doing its share. Here our billets are scattered all over the town, Wilcox has his ambulance men in one end of the town, while Foley and his bunch have a farm away out the other way, still others in an ex-cabaret, hall or theatre billet as it is called in the center of the town. So in this latter place we have had a couple of company shows and dances. We have had for our leading features the 102nd Amb. Co. orchestra composed of H. P. Davis, E. Davis, Widinghoff, Kenney, Worley, Avallon, Phillips and usually Diorio, now of the 104th and our double quartet made up of Stewart, Deutsch, Morrell, Avallon, Wall, Wright, Hannon and Swartz.

To have a feed in this small town, as in most small towns, one must go to the Boucherie, buy your meat, then go next door or across the street and have it fried along with some potatoes and bread. To get the bread the French lady must have a bread ticket, and for each customer the Boulangerie has

a small round stick of wood about eighteen inches long whittled off flat for a couple of inches on one end for the customer's name, and for each loaf dupain a notch is cut in the stick, and this is how they keep their books, the same as some Westerners used to knick the stock of their rifles every time they shot a man.

To get a shave be sure and keep your mouth closed for the "coiffeur" doesn't rub the lather in with his hand but with the brush and the way they go at it—well, take the tip, if you don't want your teeth cleaned and also your throat swabbed.

Then once a week the towns have a market day, when all the folks for miles around pile into their two wheeled carts, take along a few things to sell, or if they don't have a cart, they promenade in, as they call it, with a basket full of chickens or rabbits, then set up shop on the village square, most everything on the calendar being for sale.

Aside from the accident that Banks and McElroy had, when some driver left his disabled truck in the road without lights and Silent Mac had to go in with his jaw fractured in two places, the fellows have kept exceptionally well, despite the fact that several civilians have died with the Flu. None of our boys have had it; guess we haven't stopped doing four's east and squads round about long enough to let a germ light. And our new bath house where ten can go in at once has helped us to get rid of friend "coot."

Among the fellows that went from here down to that dance at Tours were Town Mayor Deutsch, Rad, Bob McDonald, Wills, Beers, Banks and Geer, all had a fine time.

Since we have come here most of the clothing issued is of the jinkey variety, that is long breeches and an extra heavy pair of shoes with toe plates on them that are known as the Pershing last and we hope they will be ours, for we believe now more than ever in that slogan "See America First."

On February 19th we had our Divisional review by General Pershing and it sure was a humdinger, regular West Point stuff, and the General impressed us all very deeply by his sitting his snappy little white mount so well, and also in his walk through mud over ditches for over two hours. He personally inspected every officer and man, not losing a minute, tiring out several of his staff, and we could not help but admire the snap and pep for one of his years. Hope he won't ever see this letter for he would surely want to make me a corporal or something. Modest, that's me all over, Mabel.

Well, the old Y. D. showed that they could drill if they want to and the more one sees of these Yanks the more proud he gets, so we should never mind about this service stripe argument. Put 'em in a crowd mix 'em up, and we will pick out a Y. D. man every time. How, you say? In his air, in his attitude of "who in the world has anything on us?" His face borders on the hard boiled, for he has been through seven hells, but seems to say "Treat me white, for I've learned my lesson in the Brotherhood of Men and I'll spot your first sign of deceit or insincerity," in his speech is a tone of seriousness, in his eye is the look of a **clean man**, a man who has been tempered and mellowed by scenes of the past year, his is a heart all loyal. "A man worth while." How do you like them for apples?

We have two men from our company looking after the sanitary train canteen, two men at the amusement tent, three men, Lee Hull, John Safko and LeRoy McKinnon with the Red Cross and several others on duty with ambulances with the 102nd Field Hospital.

Men in our company in the new bugle corp for the train are Ballard, Kwansniski, Pomeroy, Denson, Keane and Lilley. Yes, and Harry Monahan is back from the hospital and there go fourteen new men being transferred to other outfits and on the other side of the road are Capt. Durham, Lewis Hough, Ferris, Kenny and Osborne waiting for transportation, for they are going to school for a few months special course in this country and those men with packs are men going on permission. Ah, that's it, I knew there was something I was going to tell you. There are four classes of passes, first three, twenty four hour, three day and fourteen day permissions. You name the city you want to go to, but not to Paris or out of the country, give the reason for going and must pay your own bills. Fourth variety is a duty status pass of seven days to some leave area, and your Uncle Sam pays all the bills. There are some nineteen different leave areas already established in France, but most of our men have been sent to St. Malo. The trip by train is the only bad parts of the trip. St. Malo on the Brittany coast with all its deep sea legends, noted for its brave sailors and adventurous fishermen, appeals to many, for there one can buy anything most that you at home can buy, even to an ice cream soda and top it off with a beer if you wish. Among those who have been or now are at St. Malo are Martin Clarks, Stan Glover, Bill Larson, Jim O'Connel, Radikin, Walter Scott, Cooper and also Ben Butler and Billy West from Headquarters.

The trip I won out of the grab bag was to the Haute Pyrennes leave area in the Pyrennes Mountains, some five hundred kilometer trip, carry your pack, and leave trains are usually made up of second and third class coaches, sleep sitting up if you can. Twenty eight hour trip, each way, down through Le Mans, Bordeaux, Pan and then into the mountains as far as the train can go, which in this case was Pierrefitte, then by electric cars up into the mountains ten kilometers over winding roads, deep ravines, gorges, into and out of tunnels, finally reaching our home for the next week in the beautiful little town of Canteret, altitude 3,000 feet, nestled away on a plateau, surrounded on three sides by wonderful snow capped mountains and only ten miles from Spain. Some twenty five hotels that will accomodate about 2,800 persons, all were closed during the war but now open to men of the A. E. F. until June when the tourist season opens. We were given fine rooms, had a good feed, and mind you these same places set tourists back nine and ten dollars a day. Then we went out to give the Y. M. C. A. the once over, for in a leave area they look after all the amusements. In this town the Y had fallen in soft into a most palatial ex-gambling rendezvous. One enters the great dancing hall, then the cosy theatre and on into the reading room, then into the amusement room, all being luxuriously furnished, costly tapestry, paneled ceilings, massive chandeliers, the finest pool and billiard tables, and set off to one side and now robbed of its mechanism was a roulette table where twas said one of our well known Americans had lost a million dollars. Then you plunk down into some of the beautiful sofas and go most out of sight, like Denman Thompson in The Old Homestead, then on coming up for air, you cross your pedal extremities and try to assume the air that you are perfectly used to all these mere trifles and you dream on and on trying to make your self believe that you have rubbed elbows with millionaires all your life and wish John D. Stonefeller would drift by about now and just to show him who you were, you wouldn't pay any more attention to him than as though he was a guy peddling shoe strings on the corner next to Lyon and Grummans Millinery Store.

Then being rather tired from the trip, you go over and go to bed and the next morning you get up at four, put on your pack, go up to the top of the highest peak in sight and as you reach out for a souvenir to take home to the Comfort Club,—pardon me just a minute folks, there's a couple of guys butting in here and want to know where I think I am getting off with

that line of stuff, "Why, old man, they won't believe that stuff. They know you didn't get up before breakfast and no buglers down there." Well, now, you two duffers, wait a minute. Who is writing this letter any how? You two are dumb enough to be non coms, don't you remember that phrase "When you are in Rome, do as the Romans do." Well we are in Spain, and you must know their national sport.

Well, as I was saying, just as I reached out, I fell down and down and down and as I came to, I was on the floor, for two guys had rolled me out of bed, said it was eleven thirty and we were to mange tout sweet.

Next day folks we actually did go up mountain climbing over the same route the Moors had come down, and it was beautiful scenery, winding paths almost straight up, cascades, deep gorges and beaucoup snow all drifted in the passes. We passed the frontier guards, on up past a little saw mill, with its up and down saws driven by water power, that had made the owner rich, but he was a typical mountaineer, even to his shoes made of an untanned hide and laced up with raw hide. Still further up we passed a cave where there was a stream of warm water bubbling up with a strong odor of sulphur to it and smelled for all the world like water that had had eggs boiled in it, but we didn't mind that for even that was more than we had been getting, but we didn't drink much for we didn't want to get lit away up there. Still further up was a little cabin, and for the life of me I don't know how they could ever build it away up there, unless perhaps Jerry Holmes sent it by mail. Anyway it had a sign out "Cognac du vente" we all looked the cabin over expecting to find one of those eighteen year old, blue eyed, golden haired damsels, fair of face and figure, usually seen in plays depicting such life, but there was none to be found. I wonder if they have been fooling us up at the Lyric? Lands, no, we didn't drink any cognac, cause a couple of mis-steps up there might mean that some Parson would be earning a dollar and a half in about two months by marrying our widow to the village cut up. Finally we reached the Pont de Espagne, which is a bridge about three miles from Spain. Here we could go no further, as snow had made avalanches very likely. Altitude here was 5,000 feet, no flowers have dared the snow, trees mostly conifers and the song birds have not yet come over from the South. Part way up can be seen herds of sheep and goats grazing together, while the shepherd that watches is usually a small boy or a very old lady



As you are enwrapped with all the grandeur, your mind goes back to some moving pictures showing similar scenes, with high priced actors making human bridges and daring jumps from point to point or over lover's leap, but with all their nerve you can't seem to make yourself remember of seeing many of them up where the audience was mostly of the Allemande variety.

Next day we tried hiking in another direction this time to an altitude of 4,000 feet to a barn where Queen Hortense of Holland, mother of Napoleon III, had stayed for two nights on being caught in a storm while fleeing from the French Revolutionists in 1807. We made the place and as we stood there getting our breath about a dozen little French girls with a matron or two went on up past us and maybe those kids can't climb mountains, they sure made us look cheap.

Down in the town were sulphur baths of all kinds, the water coming out of the hills at a temperature of 27 to 30 degrees centigrad so during the week I had one of each and believe me or not, after the second one I thought I felt a cootie bothering me and, as a searched, two of them actually flew out so saturated with sulphur that they looked just like lightning bugs.

The best day of all was the excursion down to the city of Lourdes, some fifteen miles away, I wouldn't have missed that for anything. First you pass through the center of the city, where there seems to be nothing but souvenirs for sale, then out past the beautiful parks with their fine statuary. Then in front of you looms up that massive Basilique and the Chaplain explains the beautiful legend of how little thirteen year old Bernadette Soubirone, a sufferer of asthma, had the vision while crossing the river Gave that she would be cured and that a church should be erected there, that sojourners from all the world could come there and derive benefit. Her mother thinking that perhaps her illness had affected her mentally, forbade her to go there, but on the following Sunday she was allowed to go again and at that time the vision was repeated. So the civil and religious authorities built a church, this was in 1858. But there is no need of my explaining this for most all have heard it. Then as we entered the lower part of the church there are thousands of testimonials of thanks for benefits received, some in English, some in French, all carved and gilded in the marble walls. Also upstairs it is the same and in addition large numbers of souvenirs from persons benefited. Everything one could think of has been sent in, croix de guerres, medals of all



wars, pieces of tapestry, banners, lace, pictures, swords, anchors, etc., etc., till the walls have come to look most like a curio shop. Outside the Cathedral in the grotto or cave are persons at prayer, many of them cripples having faith that they soon be cured, the same as the former owners of crutches, trusses, splints and plaster casts that hang from the rocks overhead. Up on the hill on the opposite side is Le Calvaire, where on its winding paths are groups of life sized bronze statues, depicting the fourteen epochs in the life and crucifixion of Christ. At the eleventh station, showing the Roman soldiers spiking the feet of Christ to the cross is so real, that children have placed bouquets of violets upon it and fastened beads to his hands. Another thing of interest in this city is an old fort dating back to the time of Caesar, it has had the flags of four different nations fly from its tower. Also of interest is the railway up to the mountain where there is a large illuminated cross and outside the city a few miles is a grotto that can be entered to a depth of a full kilometer and is full of wondrous stalactites and stalagmites everything from an animal's head to a pipe organ and beaucoup icicles.

Now in closing let me say,

1. We hope to come home soon
2. We are not going to talk war
3. We shall do some talking at the next primaries
4. We are going to that Comfort Club Banquet
5. We hope that that Man's Man" General Clarence R. Edwards will be there.

And if we have gotten these leggins and heavy shoes off and donned a pair of pumps, we will be so light and happy that we will have to put some rocks in our pockets to keep from flitting up on the chandalier or out the windows. Then if the old Nutmeg State gives us a few months' pay like we hear some states are doing, here's one guy that's going to invest it in a big orchard and raise nothing but "pomme de terre frutes". Come out and see me.

"Fini",

DICK BARLOW,

Secretary and Treasurer Foreign Chapter  
Bridgeport Comfort Club.

Row de dow, have the mess sergeant add three carrots to the soup, here's Oppenheimer, Best, Etheridge, Turner and Pill back to our company.

Through the long and dreary days  
At Liffol  
And the days of Parlez-vous——  
Chemin des Dames  
Seicheprey, Xivray, Apremont  
Northwest of Toul.  
The Red, Red days of Hell  
On the Marne  
At Saint Mihiel and the Woivre  
To the finish "On les aura!"  
At Verdun.  
Just to know someone was with us  
Was "for" us all the time  
Helped a lot!  
Not one of us forgets it  
And no one ever will.  
And so——  
We thank you most sincerely  
Comfort Club!  
Rad—A. E. F.













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